43471

National Library of Canada | Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

CANADIAN THESES ON MICROFICHE | THÈSES CANADIENNES SUR MICROFICHE

NAME OF AUTHOR/NOM DE L'AUTEUR PATRICIAMAY FLORENCE McBLANE

TITLE OF THESIS/TITRE DE LA THÈSE AFRICAN NOVELS IN ENGLISH FOR HIGH SCHOOL USE

UNIVERSITY/UNIVERSITÉ UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED/ GRADE POUR LEQUEL CETTE THÈSE FUT PRÉSENTÉE MASTER OF EDUCATION

YEAR THIS DEGREE CONFERRED/ANNÉE D'OBTENTION DE CE GRADE 1979

NAME OF SUPERVISOR/NOM DU DIRECTEUR DE THÈSE DR. J. OSTER

Permission is hereby granted to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

L'autorisation est, par la présente, accordée à la BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.

L'auteur se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans l'autorisation écrite de l'auteur.

DATED/DATÉ April 25, 1979 SIGNED/SIGNÉ Patriciamay F. McBlane

PERMANENT ADDRESS/RÉSIDENCE FIXE 114 Pine Street
Sherwood Park, Alta.
T8A 1G8.

NL-91 (3-74)

National Library of Canada

Cataloguing Branch
Canadian Theses Division

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Direction du catalogage
Division des thèses canadiennes

NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us a poor photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30. Please read the authorization forms which accompany this thesis.

THIS DISSERTATION
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED

AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de mauvaise qualité.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30. Veuillez prendre connaissance des formules d'autorisation qui accompagnent cette thèse.

LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE

NL-339 (3/77)

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

AFRICAN NOVELS IN ENGLISH FOR HIGH SCHOOL USE

by

PATRICIAMAY FLORENCE McBLANE

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1979

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "African Novels in English for High School Use" submitted by Patriciamay Florence McBlane in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

John E. Chester
Supervisor

James D. Bell

N. A. Boyce

Date April 16, 1979

ABSTRACT

This study provides information about African novels written in English which have possibilities for use in high school language arts classes. Information is organized by beginning with general statements concerning the need for greater literary diversity in schools and moving through perspectives to consider in assessing African novels. These perspectives are used in the overview of African novels and the analysis of the ten novels selected for high school use.

The need for students to be exposed to a wider variety of literary materials is established through a review of the changing concept of English literature, educator's views about the need for the study of more diverse literature, and the changes perceived in recent language arts curriculum objectives. Oral tradition, cultural, literary and educational perspectives are presented to increase understanding of the various ways in which African novels written in English may be viewed while assessing their potential for use in high school classrooms.

The overview of eighty novels by forty-two novelists reveals considerable variety in literary quality, themes, and trends. The ten novels selected that have potential for use with high school students are Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God, No Longer at Ease, and A Man of the People; Amos Tutuola's The Palm-Wine Drinkard; Gabriel Okara's The Voice; Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Weep Not, Child; Nkem Nwankwo's Danda; Chukwuemeka Ike's Toads For Supper; and Legson Kayira's Jingala. Each novel is briefly analysed to provide textual,

technical and critical information for teachers. The extensive bibliography identifies the wide range of books and articles regarding various aspects of African novels written in English available to teachers.

The literary and cultural insights available to high school students through the study of selected African novels written in English make these novels an asset to the English classroom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most appreciative of the time and patience extended to me by Dr. J. E. Oster. His critical and organizational insights provided excellent guidance throughout this study. Thanks is also expressed to Dr. J. Bell and Dr. N. Page for the interest they took in the study and for their helpful comments, criticism and advice.

Grateful acknowledgement is further extended to Mr. Wm. Sime, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, County of Strathcona who exhibited patience and understanding throughout the months during which this thesis was written, and to Margie Lynn whose perseverence in typing the various drafts was undaunted.

Special thanks is given to my husband, Rorri, whose unfailing support, patient encouragement and subtle cajoling kept me on track so this study could reach completion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER — PAGE

I. TEACHING THE AFRICAN NOVEL WRITTEN IN ENGLISH IN HIGH SCHOOL: AN INTRODUCTION 1

II. PERSPECTIVES TO CONSIDER IN THE ASSESSMENT OF AFRICAN NOVELS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH 15

Oral Tradition in the Cultural Environment 17

African Writers' Views of African Literature 20

Literary and Educational Considerations for the Selection and Analysis of African Novels Written in English 25

III. OVERVIEW OF AFRICAN NOVELS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH 36

West African Novelists 38

Early West African Novelists 39

More Recent West African Novelists 49

East African Novelists 57

South African Novelists 66

Trends in African Novels Written in English 70

Selection of Novels For High School Use 72

IV. ANALYSIS OF SELECTED NOVELS 76

Achebe: Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God, No Longer at Ease, and A Man of the People 77

Tutuola: The Palm-Wine Drinkard and Okara: The Voice 94

Ngugi: Weep Not, Child 107

Nwankwo: Danda, Ike: Toads For Supper and Kayira: Jingala 114

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 133

BIBLIOGRAPHY 140

CHAPTER I

TEACHING THE AFRICAN NOVEL WRITTEN IN ENGLISH IN HIGH SCHOOL: AN INTRODUCTION

During the 1950's English literature, that literature traditionally considered to be the domain of British, then British and American writers, began expanding to include writers from various areas of the world where English is the language of education, business and government. King (1974), Walsh (1973) and McLeod (1961) suggest that this shift in perception of English literature offers numerous ramifications to writers, critics and educators. With the contributions of writers from diverse backgrounds English literature offers a new richness and variety to its readers.

> In the fledgling national literature of Malaya, West Africa and even the West Indies there is a sense of urgency. . . made all the more impressive by the fusion of subjects of international importance though of national and strictly local origin, with the more permanent and universal values that men cherish. (McLeod, 1961, 6)

McLeod (1961) recognized that these new literatures would play an active role in the changing concept of English literature. King (1974) later examined this role more closely.

> The best books of the year are as likely to be written by Ghanaians, West Indians or Australians as by Americans or Englishmen and the subject matter, themes and styles will often include characteristics that are puzzling to the foreigner. Since such characteristics may add to or detract from the qualities of a book, they are likely to become an increasingly important concern to readers, students and critics. . . . (1)

The subject matter and styles stemming from the writers' national backgrounds challenge the accepted techniques of the English tradition. McLeod (1961) referred to this possibility when

he indicated that writers were making a conscious effort to develop forms of expression that were particularly suited to their backgrounds, subject, and readership. Larson (1971) specifically refers to the changes in technique and the reason for it in the African novel when he indicates

> that the African novel is frequently different from its Western counterpart and that the differences can be attributed to cultural background; and that in spite of the lack of several typical unities which are generally considered to hold the western novel together, that is, to give it its structural background, the African writer has created new unities which give his fiction form and pattern. (21)

So, variety in the writers' presentations may be reflected in the way language is used by the authors and their creations, in descriptions of social and cultural aspects of societies with which North American and European readers are unfamiliar and in the way in which plot and theme are developed while portraying concerns that reinforce similar aspects in man's struggle for survival.

As these newer literatures have become known and are making an impression on the world literary scene, educators are becoming aware of the possibilities of using a wider selection of literature in schools to reveal both the common and unique aspects of man's development and to increase international understanding. Rosenblatt (1968) stressed that the substance of literature is everything a man has thought, felt or created and that we have no basis for considering ours the only, or best possible cultural pattern. Arnez (1969) pointed out that short of becoming a person of another culture or interacting with one daily, the best way to gain an understanding of people is to read the literature their culture has

produced.

Golub (1975), Hipple (1966), Dietrich (1972), Hook (1972), Loban, Ryan and Squire (1969), Bone (1969), Stambolian (1970) and Povey (1976) each support the position that it is through the study of literature that students can best be prepared to function effectively as adults in a shrinking and pluralistic world. These educators emphasize the need for revision in present English curriculums to facilitate the enlarging of student perceptions about literature, language and life. Perry (1975) capsulizes the external knowledge to be gained from a broader literature program,

> Literature serves as a mirror by which man is reflected; therefore, it is through books that one can gain knowledge about people who live in another country, in another community, or whose ethnic, cultural, or religious background may be different from one's own (8)

while Stanford (1970) comments on the internal value of a broader literature program for students.

> Isn't good literature an attempt to create meaning out of the chaos of our lives? Isn't literature a way of not only releasing our feelings, but of using them to create beauty and understanding? If we allow our students to listen to honest writers struggling to deal with this very frightening world, perhaps they will not only experience the comfort of knowing that others have faced these same problems and the insight of seeing different perspectives on the problems, but perhaps they will also see that literature can be, for them, too, a way of dealing with the world, a way of handling and using their feelings. . . . (374)

It must be recognized that an expanded literature program should include non-western literatures such as those of Asia, India, Africa, the West Indies and South America. The aforementioned academic spokesmen reflect the notion that since Canada and the

United States are built on a multi-cultural base, educators have a responsibility to make available cross-cultural experiences through literature. F. E. Ross in the forward to Negro Literature for High School Students presents a very basic reason for including the study of black literature.

> Foundations are what English teachers build. If they teach a literature that is markedly without Negro writers, they are saying implicitly each day, Boys and girls, let's open our books today and read about what white people do and think. Some teachers do not know they are implying this; some white students do not know it; most Negro students do — a crushing concept of worthlessness, which must be true because books do not lie: only white people have done any thinking, feeling, achieving worth setting down. Is it this tragic foundation English teachers seek to build? (Dodds, 1968, iv)

Guth (1973) offers a literary perspective to the need to include black authors in the English program.

> One very basic thing happens inevitably when we take the work of authentic black writers into the classroom: We become more strongly aware of what *honesty* means in the use of language. We introduce a heightened *sense of reality* into our work with literature. We reopen for our students the basic question of how the word relates to the world. . . . We come to deal with the kind of bitter truth that is ultimately stronger than halfhearted lies. We learn something about ourselves, about the society we live in, about what people are capable of. (272)

Therefore, the inclusion of black authors in the high school English program would provide students with a broader base from which to understand how man uses language to express his concerns and share his experiences, how man manipulates language to enhance his point of view, and how man the world over faces similar struggles which are worked out according to the cultural environment in

which he finds himself.

Three researchers, Luck (1972), Bazelak (1973) and Simson (1974), reflect the need for students of English to study more diverse literature. Luck (1972), accepting the idea that students studying literature should be exposed to a wider range of writers, conducted an investigation into the extent to which black literary figures and works of black writers were included in high school literature anthologies. He wanted to determine and report on their availability and to show how the inclusion of such literature could enrich and improve the quality of the lives of non-black students. Luck concluded that recently some efforts have been made to include literature by black writers, but more needs to be done. He recommended, among other things, that curriculum developers and teachers develop an awareness of what black writers have contributed to the field of literature so that a deeper appreciation of the worth of the individual of different cultures can be fostered and that human dignity can be stressed.

Bazelak (1973) conducted a response study involving a comparison of racial attitudes of a group reading black literature with the attitudes of a control group. The 140 tenth graders were of a racially-mixed background and came from a suburban New York State school. Each student in the experimental group was to read four short stories by Afro-Americans and give a free response to their reading which was then analyzed according to reading ability, racial attitudes and literary comprehension. The control group continued its regular course. However, both groups were given pre and post attitude tests. The results revealed that there was little

observed attitude change because of unfamiliarity with black literature. It was further noted that both black and white students had difficulty comprehending figurative language, character and tone as they had been provided with no background information from which to draw when attempting to understand the short stories. Bazelek recommended that Afro-American literature and other minority literature be incorporated into the regular offerings of the English curriculum. Such inclusions would enhance the quality of literature instruction in schools by providing students with opportunities to examine the literary achievement of diverse cultures and to enlarge student understanding of self and others.

Simson (1974) examined the relationship between the theory of Black literature courses and what happens in practice. Students and instructors involved in Black literature courses in New York State during 1972-73 were asked to fill out questionnaires about course content, methods of instruction, instructor background and effectiveness, and the effect of the course on the students. Indications, based on a 40% questionnaire return, were that far more Afro-American literature was being taught than non-American Black literature. Methods used were similar to those used in traditional literature courses and instructors prepared themselves for the courses through private study. The majority of students indicated that taking a Black literature course had been a positive experience for there was an increase in their understanding of the black experience and in their respect for the intellectual achievement of Blacks.

All the previously mentioned educators and researchers stress the need for the inclusion of a wider range of literature in high

school English courses. Killam (1973-74) of Acadia University focuses on the Canadian situation in his expression of need for wider literary selections to be offered to students. He says,

> I suppose what I am suggesting we contemplate is a shift in the emphasis which currently exists. Let us shift the periphery to the centre. . . . I think it is true to say that the intrinsic worth and the development of a Canadian tradition can be focused and enriched by contrasting and comparing it with the longer literary tradition of England. I think it equally true to suggest that it can be elaborated and enriched by adding to our syllabuses examples of the literatures in English from countries other than those we dwell on — from Africa, the Caribbean, India, Australia and New Zealand — literature with which we have much more in common than might at first be supposed. (696-7)

These recent studies into the availability of, and response to Black literature courses, and educators' increased awareness of the need to broaden the literary base of the English courses being offered to students have helped to center the focus of this study. The purposes of this study are

1. to provide an overview of African novels written in English in order to identify those novels that have possibilities for use in the high school classroom
2. to provide information for teachers by presenting a brief analysis of the selected novels.

While educators cited previously agree that the literature base of English courses needs broadening because of our increasing awareness of the need to understand our fellow man in this ever shrinking world, few studies have been conducted to investigate the contribution which non-western literary artists could make to enlarging student perception of literature, language and life. Three investigations primarily related to Afro-American literature have

been discussed. Two further studies were found which relate to African literature and the high school student.

Bostick (1971) made a case for the inclusion of Afro-French literature in the foreign languages program of the American school system. He shows teachers how the study of Afro-French literature provides students with greater understanding of how the French language can be manipulated in imaginative writing, an aspect not usually seen by students learning a new language. He then provides guidelines as to what would be suitable for inclusion at what level and how both the literature and the culture that goes with it can become an integral part of the ongoing French program.

Hesse (1974) investigated how the teaching of the cultural background affects student understanding of African literature. During October 1972, Hesse conducted a two-week study at the Saddle River Country Day School in New Jersey to determine the effectiveness of the "cultural approach". Forty-two students divided into an experimental and a control group were given Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart and Arrow of God to read. The experimental group was provided with cultural background information through discussion, films, slides, posters and music. The control group was given no background. The follow-up discussions and written work revealed the experimental group gained a higher level of insight into the novels than did the students of the control group. Hesse, thus, stressed the importance of providing students, prior to study of the literature itself, with a means of fostering an understanding of the culture from which the works came.

In eastern Canada, attempts have been made in Ontario and Nova

Scotia to encourage the use of African literature in high schools. In 1970 the Ontario Council of Teachers of English initiated a seminar on "African Literature in Ontario Schools". Panelists included Margaret Laurence and Dr. S. O. Mezu of Nigeria. Teacher response was favorable and numerous requests for further information were received following the sessions (Killam, 1973-74). Then, in 1975 Saint Mary's University under the sponsorship of the Nova Scotia Department of Education offered a course entitled An International Seminar on Non-western Humanities in America. The main objective of the seminar was to provide training for teachers so they would be able to introduce into their classrooms the neglected arts of three non-western traditions found in North America today, namely those of the Amerindian, the Eskimo, and the African (Sanford, 1976, 20).

Within Alberta, two African novels, Weep Not, Child and Things Fall Apart have been on the recommended list for several years as has been a literature module entitled Africa's Contemporary Authors. The purposes identified for the module are

> to help students, through literature, to appreciate the African, his culture, and his contributions to the world of today, and to consider the distinctive features of the works of modern African writers. (Alberta Education, 1975, 131)

Clearly, the opportunity for the study of some non-western literature is available. Yet, the results shown on a questionnaire sent to all English teachers in Alberta in 1976 reveal that only eight teachers ever offered this material to students.

Even with some African titles being added to recommended book lists for secondary schools across Canada, African literature remains little known to the Canadian reading audience. Perhaps the

reason for the lack of interest in the African literary achievement is the lack of knowledge about which novels have literary merit and what they contain that is of interest to students and the study of literature. This investigation has significance because it answers this need by identifying novels of merit and by providing an analysis of each so teachers have a means of gaining the necessary background with which to make decisions concerning which selection would be most appropriate for particular groups of students.

Recent detailing of specific Language Arts objectives for grades one to twelve in Alberta provides justification and increased opportunity for the introduction of the study of literature from different areas of the world. The objectives which reflect this intent are

> The program should provide opportunities for students to develop their understanding and apply their knowledge in the following dimensions of language:
>
> . . . . . .
>
> 10. language as a dynamic system which records, reflects and affects cultures;
>
> 11. use of language to explore the environment and ideas of others, to develop new concepts and to evaluate what is discovered;
>
> 12. role of language in increasing understanding of self and others;
>
> 13. use of language to stir imagination, deepen understanding, arouse emotion and give pleasure;
>
> . . . . (Alberta Education, 1978, 6)

African novels would be an effective means through which to fulfill the above objectives. Many African novels reveal traditional aspects of life as part of plot development. The African has been involuntarily affected by the use of English within his homeland. This has caused an African English to develop and aspects of this use of language are presented through the characters who form a

major component in the African novel. Providing students with opportunities to explore another culture through literature allows his understanding of the common and unique features of man to develop and stimulates his imagination and emotion to respond to the unfamiliar encounter. African novels offer innumerable ways for students to bring contextual information to the explication of the text, to extract cultural information, and to apply literary terms and critical systems to the interpretation of the literary text.

Hesse (1974) pointed out that because the African writer has had to deal with unique problems (his dual audience, the forging of new relationships between his mother tongue and the foreign language imposed on him, and the reconciling of the western literary models with the traditional models) his works have a richness and variety not as accessible in other literatures. Because of the African novelist's solutions to these problems, his novels offer interesting literary material for students who seek to learn more about themselves, others and what each is capable of contributing to the world which we share.

Hesse (1974) was aware of some of the difficulties African literature can present to the non-African reader and has shown through his study that most of the problems stem from a lack of cultural background and an unwillingness or inability to approach African literature from an African frame of reference. He points out that African literature is a reflection of African tradition and since this tradition is different from the Western tradition, critics, teachers and students will have to learn about the cultural background of the writers to insightfully appreciate the contributions

of African literature. Because the author of this study has not grown up in Africa, some difficulties in deciding if the use of English and the reflection of the culture is authentic need to be faced. However, it should be noted that the writer has taught African literature in the West Indies, Papua New Guinea, and Canada for several years and has assisted teachers with the teaching of African literature in Alberta. In addition, since this study is intended to be useful for Canadian teachers and students, the Canadian investigator faced the same problems teachers and students will have to face and so has worked out solutions prior to the presentation of the literature to students. Understanding gained through these experiences will, in part, help to diminish some of the anticipated difficulties, while the use of current secondary sources will clarify remaining confusions.

Several delimitations have been placed on the study. The investigation focuses on African writers because of their increasing contribution to literary diversity, because of their greater visibility and growth on the world scene, because black people consider their roots to be grounded in African soil and because of interest in African achievements. It should be further noted that this investigation is restricted to the presentation of novels written in English by Black Africans during the years 1952-77.

The birth of novel writing in English began in Nigeria with Amos Tutuola's The Palm-Wine Drinkard in 1952. Since that time novel writing has flourished in Nigeria and other black African countries. The novels have emphasized the value of the African tradition and the African's struggle to understand and assimilate

change in his society. The decision to include only Black African authors who write in English has been influenced by the variety which African novels in English offer students by providing literary material through which to learn about themselves, others, the manipulation of language and literary techniques. In the words of Killam (1973-74)

> Great and good literature is that which possesses the unique blending of matter, design and execution which leads a reader on to a new awareness of the greater potentialities of self. As well, and as important to the success of a literary work, is that it is created by someone exceptionally in tune with the historical and social circumstances of his time. The artist's work may therefore look outward and portray his society or look inward and portray his relationship to the society. (674)

Thus, the investigation of fiction by Black African authors written in English is an appropriate means through which to increase student understanding of non-Anglo groups who express their culture and value system in the English language, who participate in international developments and whose people we have increasing opportunities to meet in our travels or theirs.

In Chapter One of this study the need for African novels to be considered for use in the high school English class has been established. Chapter Two provides background information concerning the place of the oral tradition in African society, the views African authors hold about the purposes of African literary material and the development of the literary and educational perspectives through which the African novels will be viewed during consideration for use with high school students.

Chapter Three presents the overview of African novels written in English beginning with an alphabetical presentation of the West

African writers of historical significance. Sections outlining modern West African, East African and South African novels follow, each individually arranged alphabetically by novelists. Within each section a brief summary of the influences of the time is presented followed by a capsulization of each novel, and a discussion of any features it may have in common with other African novels or any theme or trend it may exemplify. The chapter is concluded with a consolidation of the trends in African novels and the selection of novels that would be appropriate for use with high school students.

Analysis of the selected novels occurs in Chapter Four where each novel is discussed in more detail to provide teachers with textual, technical and critical information concerning the works. Chapter Five summarizes the study, draws conclusions, and suggests implications and recommendations for further consideration. The reference section draws together the numerous primary and secondary sources available for teachers interested in pursuing the study of the African novel written in English.

CHAPTER II

PERSPECTIVES TO CONSIDER IN THE ASSESSMENT OF AFRICAN NOVELS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH

> Literature is a mirror of life, of life in its fullness. Literature is a perfect mirror — in the sense that it depicts not only the surface of man and society; literature shows life in its depth, shows the hidden forces behind the every-day manifestations of life. (Chidyausiku, 1966, 44)

Broadly defined, literature is the collective written expression of a group, a race, a people. It is the aggregate representation of the culture that nurtures it. Appreciation of a piece of fiction is enhanced by an understanding of the background from which it comes. Ladu (1968) comments on this facet of literary appreciation in her publication, Teaching for Cross-Cultural Understanding.

> No customs, belief, or behavior can be understood out of its sociocultural context. That is, any items of behavior, any tradition or pattern can be evaluated correctly only in the light of its meaning to the people who practice it, its relation to other elements of the culture, and the part it plays in the adaptation of the people to their environment or to one another. No custom is 'odd' to the people who practice it. (5)

Cyprian Ekwensi (1964) speaks of the problem of cultural truth in the home society.

> If there is one problem which the Nigerian writer must prepare to face it is the oversensitiveness of his public to truth. The novelist must mirror society as it is if his work is to have any value. Unfortunately, this is an age of dreams and no mirror has yet been designed to reflect dreams. The result is that his work often represents a conflict between the image as visualized in the minds of the ardent nationalists and the true image reflected in the mirror.

> Nigeria is fortunate in having a reputation for honest novelists even before independence. It would be very unfortunate if they now found it necessary to compromise their artistic integrity. Truth must be bitter but it can also be beautiful. (476)

These comments are most appropriate for beginning a presentation of perspectives from which to consider novels from an unfamiliar culture. Africa has long been considered a continent where bizarre customs and traditions hold sway. It is up to teachers and readers of African fiction to realize that, in the main, African novels deal with the same themes as one finds in the writings of other peoples of the world. Since the orientation, background and environment of African writers differ from writers of other cultures, it follows that their perception and treatment of these themes will be different.

Taban Lo Liyong (1965) identifies the writer's struggle with his theme.

> A writer writes to teach, to entertain, or to exhibit prowess in a medium, or just to release emotion. As such, a writer (or any artist) is decidedly a selfish person — selfish in the sense that he is moved to write from within. If a writer is to write successfully, he must write with all his heart. To write with all his heart, the topic, theme or problem must be closest to his heart. A writer courts an idea, it accepts him, and then it bosses him. When it has engrossed him, he can write with passion. He will write truth, . . . as he conceives it in his mind. To think through a theme, become so obsessed with it, so that it rules the writer and dictates to him to give it utterance, demands the qualities of an addict, or a faithful servant, or a slave. (12)

The novelist writes of what is closest to him, in a way that has meaning for him and projects his internalization and interpretation of the idea in a manner appropriate to his surroundings. The Ghanaian sociologist, K. A. Busia (1969), expresses this idea

effectively.

> When we think of a people's world-view we consider their concept of the supernatural, of nature, of man and society, and of the ways in which these concepts form a system that gives meaning to men's lives and actions. (146)

Therefore, awareness of the importance of the oral tradition in the cultural environment and an understanding of African writers' views of their literature are necessary precursors to the establishment of initial criteria from which to assess the African novels written in English to be presented in the overview.

Oral Tradition in the Cultural Environment

The African oral tradition permeated African societies far in advance of written artistry. Makouta-Mboukou (1973) speaks of the oral tradition

> which reaches every Black African social level, constitutes a powerful foundation of thought, an inexhaustible treasury of ideas, a more or less renewable means of expression, an aggregate of values. . . . (21)

Its importance is reflected in virtually all aspects of life. Role definitions in African societies provide restrictions and hierarchical status. The priest and the storyteller have particular responsibilities, while tribes have a group concern for the function of these two people. The people provide the "ear" to receive what is told to them from their gods and their ancestrally-built values and beliefs. The storyteller, as pointed out by Dathorne (1976), takes the position of spokesman in the tribe.

> The appropriate question must be: for whom is the artist creating and for what reason?

> The only obvious answer that can be given for the vast body of this literature is that the artist is rearranging traditional images of the group and in so doing, he becomes an affirmer. (x)

The storyteller becomes a spokesman through the stories that he shares with children and adults alike. His stories are of five types: myths, legends, folktales, riddles and proverbs. Taiwo (1967) comments on each of the story types. Myths are used to explain life and death, the great forces of nature and concerns related to religious observances. Legends present embellished fragments of history. Folk tales, the most popular stories, relate situations with which listeners are familiar or recall some ancient customs like forms of inheritance, birth or marriage rituals. It is during this storytelling time that children learn the ethics by which to live, so they are didactic and moralistic in nature. Riddles present embodied wisdom and doubts of the society, while proverbs are used to emphasize the words of the wise, to convey moral lessons, warnings and advice. Thus, the stance of storyteller as affirmer of group beliefs is confirmed.

That African authors have reverence for the mores of the group is more understandable when the importance of the oral tradition is known. It further shows why African writers felt it necessary to start their writing with a return to the past. The importance of writing about the past is twofold. Readers need to understand the political and social organization of traditional society from which the conflict in an individual or group issues. Secondly, the past acts as a bridge for the novelist. He has to lead his reading pub-

lic from the known to the unknown. In the oral literature the cultural images were all understood and accepted. Oral literature existed because it was required to function in the daily events of life. Written literature was not required in a non-literate society, but with this century's emphasis on literacy, the bridge from oral to written literature is an essential link. The writer is part of the group; he has to live with the group and use the tools of the group — the main tool being the importance and reverance for the past.

> Within the artistic confines of the world of oral African literature, all is whole. One alludes here primarily to the understood and understandable roles of primary and secondary audience, to the acceptance of the arrangement of images in the world and to the confirmation of a single set of standards. The mere act of writing does not destroy this union of shared experience, but the introduction, acceptance, absorption, rejection and the varieties of these in combinations — the manner of the voluntary or involuntary manipulation of the foreign culture — bring about the chaos of images. There are no longer easily identifiable, mutually agreeable manifestations of the culture . . . . The tension inherent in this is the precursor to modern African literature. (Dathorne, 1976, xi-xii)

The artist in this situation is precariously balancing between the traditional definition of the artist as confirmer and the modern role of artist as reflector of change. He has not been equipped by traditional education for the new role, nor is he sure of any acceptance in his role as reflector of change. He also must attend to the problem of writing for, and not speaking with, a local audience that is just learning to read and the audience who has sophisticated reading tastes. Thus, the novelist has to take a middle of the road approach which presents realistic material that probes the human con-

dition, but is acceptable to divergent audiences.

Chinua Achebe (1966), the foremost novelist of Africa, expresses the challenge effectively for his fellow writers.

> We must seek the freedom to express our thought and feeling, even against ourselves, without the anxiety that what we say might be taken in evidence against our race. . . . We have stood in the dock too long pleading and protesting before ruffians and frauds masquerading as distinguished judges. (139)

The consciousness of the African writer is more apparent after the examination of the cultural environment in which he lives. "His culture is an absorptive one, demonstrating a clear capacity for inheritance and the assimilation of new values" (Dathorne, 1976, 66). Some writers show cultural accommodation; others do not. Yet all African writers are dedicated to the development of a myth of being.

African Writers' Views of African Literature

> African people did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans; their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth and value and beauty! They had poetry and above all, they had dignity. It is this dignity that many African people all but lost during the colonial period and it is this they must now regain. The worst thing that can happen to any people is the loss of their dignity and self respect. The writer's duty is to help them regain it by showing them in human terms what happened to them, what they lost. There is a saying in Ibo that a man who can't tell where the rain began to beat him cannot know where he dried his body. The writer can tell the people where the rain began to beat them. After all the writer's duty is not to beat this morning's headline in topicality, it is to explore in depth the human condition. In Africa he cannot perform this task unless he has a proper sense of history. (Achebe, 1964, 8)

Achebe has explicitly stated the role of the writer in new nations. He feels authors have definite responsibilities to help their society regain their beliefs in themselves and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-denigration.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1971) supports Achebe's position.

> The novelist is haunted by the sense of the past. His work is often an attempt to come to terms with a thing that has been; has struggled, as it were, to sensitively register his encounter with history and the novelist at his best must feel himself heir to a continuous tradition. He must feel himself . . . swimming, struggling, defining himself in the mainstream of his people's historical drama. (4)

Cyprian Ekwensi (1972) sees the duty of the fiction writers as seeking truth, perhaps a broader approach to creative writing than the views held by Achebe and Ngugi.

> It is the duty of the novelist, like a surgeon, to keep dissecting until he gets to the cancer, to the truth, to where truth is embedded. The novelist does not attempt to portray a government or a nation; the novelist goes into individual souls and hearts. (81)

Others who support the view of African writers as spokesmen and teachers are Soyinka (1961) who stated that "the artist has always functioned in African society as the record of mores and experience of his society and as the voice of vision in his own time" (13), Mphahlele (1962) who commented that the writer is the sensitive point in his community, and Gabriel Okara who is concerned that his literature mirror and explore contemporary issues while remaining essentially African in style and point of view (Roscoe, 1971, 113).

African novelists have, thus, a special obligation to the societies in which they function. They have determined that literature has a social function to interpret and educate society. Achebe

(1965) best summarizes this goal.

> I for one would not wish to be excused [from the responsibility of educating his people]. I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past — with all its imperfections — was not one long night of savagery from which the first European acting on God's behalf delivered them. (4)

African people have faced up to many conflicts — political, social, educational and cultural — which colonization produced and have sought solutions for them. The American psychologist Leonard Doob (1965) indicates that it is impossible for the African to avoid encountering two ways of life.

> Everywhere the traditional society meaningfully survives. The most urbanized African knows that usually not far away is a village of his tribe where many if not most of the old ways are cultivated and practised. His native language, like that of his children, is an African language . . . . At the same time even the remotest area in the interior has experienced some contact with the West. Planes are visible overhead and roads are being built and improved. . . . The government from the capital and missionaries from the West are trying conspicuously to induce or compel the mass of Africans to improve their health, to wear respectable clothes, to increase the cultivation of a particular crop. . . . Under these conditions Africans, even if they wished to, could not accept one society and then pay little attention or no attention to the alternative; they simply must experience both societies. (376)

The African writer presents these political, educational and cultural conflicts in imaginative form so his readers may better understand the turmoil within African societies and perhaps find directions for developing solutions.

> No single action can effect Eden; no single group possesses truth; no single

> answer ever satisfies all who ask an identical question. In the hiatus between village life and cosmopolitan, between solipsism and the extended family, between black culture and white cultures, parliamentarian government and tribal allegiance, modern African writers find themselves affected by conflicting attractions and capable of providing only ironic observation instead of answer. (New, 1975, 95-6)

African writers then provide leadership through the literature they produce. Being aware of their own agony of soul, African writers will not let the new literature of Africa become

> a slavish imitation of western mode and practice. Having increasingly felt the underlying strength and flexibility of their ancestral culture, and having revalued the claims of its western counterpart, West African writers have apparently decided that they will enter the third quarter of the twentieth century with their own heritage largely intact and with the addition of only those European elements which it seems advantageous to absorb. . . . The very turbulence of the African position, the very storms it has blown up in African minds and souls, has created a situation fraught with the challenge and material that provide inspiration for the literary artist. (Roscoe, 1971, 3-4)

The African writer must re-create the past so that a sense of dignity is regained. Achebe (1964) indicates there is a strong temptation to idealize the past — that is to extol the good points and pretend the bad never existed.

> This is where the writer's integrity comes in. Will he be strong enough to overcome the temptation to select facts that flatter? If he succumbs the credibility of the world he is attempting to recreate will be called into question and he will defeat that purpose. The past is not one technicolor idyll. We have to admit that like other people's pasts ours had its good and bad. (9)

The African writer in English must reveal more in his prose than an anthropological study of a tribe, more than a tale about the traditional way of life, more than an engaging story of strange lives and societies.

> The writer can help by exposing and dramatizing the problem. But he can only do this successfully if he can go to the root of the problem. Any incompetent newspaper man reports the incident. . . . But you need a writer to bring out the human tragedy, the crisis of the soul. (Achebe, 1964, 11)

The writer further needs to be aware that to write fiction of quality, persistence and a great amount of effort is required.

> Above all, he has a responsibility to avoid shoddiness in his own work. This is very important today when some publishers will issue any trash that comes out of Africa because Africa has become the fashion. In this situation there is a real danger that some writers may not be patient enough or disciplined enough to pursue excellence in their work. (Achebe, 1964, 12)

The African writer then must be aware that to rise beyond the internal and external difficulties of writing from a relatively new nation and to maintain the purposes of writer as teacher and spokesman he has to have "minute preparation, painstaking presentation, the voice of persuasive reasonableness, care for consistency and impartiality" (Roscoe, 1971, 131).

With the above awareness and knowledge, with the return to traditional sources for material and inspiration, all the elements are present in contemporary African fiction for the creation of a body of writing that is at once dynamic, original, independent and indigenous.

Literary and Educational Considerations for the Selection and Analysis of African Novels Written in English

The importance of cultural background and the purposes of literature as perceived by a country's writers are only two aspects one must consider when viewing African novels written in English for use in high schools. The quality of the literary work must be reviewed, for ultimately the text itself is the tool students will use to unlock what is held between the book's covers. That there is a careful blending of insight into human nature, literary technique and appropriate language use in each novel needs assessment.

As T. S. Eliot, in Selected Prose postulated,"the greatness of literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards though we must remember that whether it is literature, or not, can be determined only by literary standards" (31). Adetugbo (1971), in discussing the form and style of the Nigerian novel, supports Eliot's position.

> Cultural differences notwithstanding, the experience that good literature affords can be appreciated anywhere. An understanding of the cultural background from which a work springs may help both reader and critic in appreciating more fully a particular work, but any great literary work must have an appeal beyond the culture in which it is rooted. (173)

Within and outside Africa the literary quality of African novels has been questioned openly. Soyinka (1967), an African writer and critic, is harsh in his evaluation of what publishers and critics have apparently encouraged for the sake of an "emerging" literature.

> Publishers hovered like benevolent vultures
> on the still foetus of the African Muse.
> At a given signal they tore off bits and

> pieces, fanned up with powerful wings delusions of significance in commonness and banality. The average published writer in the first few years of the post-colonial era was the most celebrated skin of inconsequence ever to obscure the true flesh of the African dilemma. (12)

Achebe (1962), Irele (1971), Palmer (1972), Roscoe (1971) and Dathorne (1976) raise the same concern. Mediocre writing should not be exalted, yet constructive criticism is an important means through which writers can identify strengths and areas needing improvement in their products. Achebe (1962) decries the practice of offering special types of criticism because the reviewer or critic has little knowledge of what the material is about. Irele (1971) summarizes the concern most effectively by pointing out that it is the new literature which needs honest critical attention. This would ensure a healthy growth that follows established standards yet encourages flexibility.

It is obvious then that standards by means of which to assess African novels need to be clarified.

> African fiction has been given time to settle; it is proliferating, and finding its way into the curricula of African, European, and American schools and universities, and the time has come to establish certain principles of criticism, and to initiate discussion on the relative merits of the various novelists. (Palmer, 1972, ix)

Broad parameters within which all novels operate have been identified by many writers, critics and educators. Although the wording may vary, consensus is that all novels must be viewed from at least two perspectives: what is said and how it is said. A sampling of supporters for these components follows.

A Handbook to Literature indicates "all novels are representations in fictional narratives of life or experience but the form is itself as protean as life and experience themselves have proved to be" (Holman, 1960, 319). Wright (1973) in trying to establish guidelines for evaluating the African novel speaks of assessing matter and manner. Ryan (1963) says "a novel does have content and it does have form" (40), and Palmer (1972) stresses

> what transforms the novel from a political or sociological work to a work of art is the novelist's technique, the devices he uses to shape, explore, define and finally evaluate his material. . . . The well-made novel is a composite of message and technique, and any work which is deficient in either is open to criticism. (x)

Therefore, the effective blending of the message with the form is the basic expectation for any novel to be studied in high school.

The "what" of any novel is that which provides the interest for reading the material. This is the portion that attends to Language Arts objectives such as "use of language to explore the environment and ideas of others, to develop new concepts and to evaluate what is discovered", and "use of language to stir imagination, deepen understanding, arouse emotion and give pleasure" (Alberta Education, 1978, 6). Message or theme is the basis of the "what"; it is the idea which controls the form. What are the ideas, the messages or the themes students can expect to explore and develop understanding of in African novels? In general terms Irele (1971) states

> Our writers are recognizably African in the sense in which they give an African character to their works and conversely, we who are African, will only accept them as speaking about us and for us in so far as they take our voice and speak with our accent. (15)

Palmer (1975) specifies Irele's view when he reveals

> the novelist must deal with the burning issues of his society, and the critic should concern himself with the novelist's treatment of these issues, whether social, cultural, political or religious, and show how relevant these novels are to the contemporary situation. (127)

African writers and critics have expressed concern that the oral tradition and cultural environment from which and in which African novels occur be recognized as significant elements in these works. The student then can expect the subject matter to be pertinent to issues in which African people are involved. There is perhaps a greater element of realism in African novels than in novels from countries where literature has different purposes.

There is also consensus among African spokesmen such as Achebe, Soyinka and Ekwensi that African writers must reveal the truth, showing both the turmoil and the acceptance of conditions in the situation portrayed. By revealing both the strengths and weaknesses of the characters and societies presented, the reader is exposed to man's many dimensions in the author's exploration of the human condition. The foundation, then, holding the work of fiction together is the theme — the idea behind, within and beyond the situation developed in the novel.

The student can expect to find universal themes developed in ways that are appropriate to the cultural environment in which they occur. However, by viewing the theme from a fresh angle or with a new perspective the student has greater opportunity to expand his understanding of the common and unique concerns of man.

Studying the theme of a novel is studying only part of what a

novel offers its reader. The impact of the theme is enhanced or diminished according to the way an author chooses to develop it. Literary techniques and language used in a novel therefore are as important as the theme itself. Walsh (1970), Roscoe (1971), Larson (1971), and King (1974) have identified several areas where techniques used to develop the African novel differ from those of its English counterpart. The enumeration of these will assist the student in understanding how the African novel may be put together.

One major difference lies in the interrelationship of plot and character. While there may be a vivid central character, there usually is less emphasis placed on character development or character introspection. An important aspect of characterization is how the character either represents the group or is in opposition to the group for it is really the effect of events on the tribe or group that is paramount. Plot development may be a loose narration of events, stories or tales connected by a character, or it may be the presentation and working out of a particular situation that affects both the individual and group. In either case it is not unusual for the events to be beyond the control of the individual. In other words, he appears to be caught up in a force larger than himself.

Emphasis on events and the group further account for the use of local color rather than clear description to develop atmosphere and mood. Local color becomes important because it provides the background for the complexities in the historical and social events which are presented or whose ramifications are felt in the situation that is dealt with in the novel.

Another difference is revealed in the honesty with which

African writers are able to either lament or satirize the turning away from tribal values which are seen as spiritual and natural, towards a gross love for materialism. The use of didactic endings ensures that the African audience understands the implications of certain actions. This technique reinforces the writer's purpose as a teacher and reflector of change. A final technique to be highlighted is the broader concept of time that appears in many African novels. Again, the reason for great leaps forward or back is often tied to the need to show the reader how something was or how it has changed. The author does not leave to chance or the reader's knowledge information that enhances the theme.

Each of the characteristics developed as a result of the blending of an important feature from the oral tradition with modern literary technique. Dathorne (1976), Larson (1971) and King (1974) each comment on the influence of the oral and cultural background on the African writer who has adapted accepted literary forms to his own purpose. It is King (1974), however, who points out that the African novelist is really only doing what novelists throughout the history of English literature have done. He emphasizes that the early novel would never have changed if someone had not been creative and daring enough to step out of the rigid framework and make a bold new presentation. The relationship between the African oral tradition and its modern novel is clearly seen in the comparison of narrator to storyteller which follows.

> The narrator often reflects the community's vision and in telling his story he may use such techniques of oral literature as proverbs, rhetorical questions, allusion to myth and didactic endings. One notices how often the

> narrator is a modern version of the tribal story-teller. The narrator's firm presence is usually felt in the opening paragraph, and though he does not call attention to himself in the way the narrator of the eighteenth century novel would, we are aware he is there, making judgements, supplying information, telling a tale. (King, 1974, 13)

The variations in literary technique, thus, add another dimension to the study of literature for students who are exposed to African novels written in English. Language use, too, plays a large part in the enhancement or de-emphasis of theme in a novel. It is the second aspect of form that needs consideration. Earlier, the fact that English is not the mother tongue of most Africans was mentioned. Within the African novel, this fact accounts for some deviations from the usual patterns which the English language follows. As Irele (1971) points out

> we have a literature written by Africans who have a distinct background as far as their experience is concerned and who are writing, or at least striving to write, within a specific cultural, social and historical framework, but who are expressing themselves in a language that they have not deliberately chosen, a language with its own structure and literary tradition, in its nature far removed from their own frame of reference. (10)

African writers have made accommodations in their language use so they could blend their vernacular thought and speech patterns with English sentence patterns. Occurrences of this nature appear in the novels with varying degrees of frequency depending on both the author's and his characters' abilities to understand and use English. Thus, when considering the appropriate use of language in the setting and for the people portrayed various presentations of English will have to be explored. Achebe (1965) clarifies the

issue when he states "the price a world language [English] must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use" (29).

The question of language use brings out three further differences from the accepted English literary mode. The first is the one discussed above. Colloquialisms, phrases and sentence patterns will appear that are unfamiliar to the non-African reader. The language style used is generally simple and straightforward, while the dialogue may appear less convincing because it is very direct. Thus, appropriate use and diverse forms of language become another dimension for consideration in the examination of the African novel written in English.

The blending of accepted and altered literary and language techniques within the African novel make it a challenging study, for students will discover how "any new literature or literary movement of value is not only subject to existing critical approaches but may itself act as a powerful agent in modifying those approaches" (Wright, 1973, ix). Further, it provides the opportunity to explore "language as a dynamic system which records, reflects and affects cultures", and the "role of language in increasing understanding of self and others" (Alberta Education, 1978, 6).

The importance of the cultural background and the ways by which to assess literary quality in the English African novel have been presented. The criteria established are similar to those identified by Bishop (1970). After reviewing criticism given African literature from 1947-1966 Bishop rejected the idea that there was only one standard by which to judge all literature. As a result Bishop delineated six standards against which he felt African literature

should be measured. These standards showed some divergences between Western and African literary criticism. His suggested standards are

1. that the form of English used in the work be a reflection of that used in the writer's homeland and not the standard form of the language
2. that African literature is written primarily for Africans and has not been distorted to project an African presence to the world
3. that African writers borrow more from their own traditions than from the Western literary traditions
4. that African literature address itself to the various and serious problems currently facing Africa
5. that African literature not falsify the natural aspects of African society and that its presentation of such be in context and not presented for its own sake
6. that African literature somehow remain African while also being literature. (401-402)

Bishop's standards exemplify the African aura that the literature should exude. Most African writers would support Bishop's standards. King (1974), Larson (1971), Dathorne (1976), Taiwo (1967), Palmer (1972), and Wright (1973) would further agree that a country's literature has maximum meaning when studied with an understanding of the people whom it represents.

For purposes of assessing the novels presented in Chapter Three and for selecting those that may be appropriate for use with high school English students, emphasis will be placed on the message. presented, the means used to develop theme and the language used to convey the presentation. Consideration will be given to the nature

of the theme in order to identify that it does relate to an African concern as well as having a universal impact. In the form used to develop theme, balance in the use of appropriate language and literary techniques will be sought.

Two further factors which will influence the selection of novels for use with high school students in Alberta are those of explicit sex and excessive use of language that would be considered inappropriate in Canadian society. It is generally accepted that if language used is appropriate to the character being portrayed then it is possible to give consideration to the use of the material with students. However, if used excessively, graphic language could be the cause of a novel's rejection for classroom use. Descriptions of sexual acts also raise questions in material being considered for use in high school classrooms. In a society which refrains from discussion of such topics in the classroom, the fact that the description could be appropriate to the advancement of plot or theme is irrelevant to the decision for a novel's inclusion in the high school program. Thus, in reviewing African novels of quality these two factors will influence decisions made related to the further study of some novels.

Finally, a note concerning which writers will be assessed is necessary. Numerous books such as Zell and Silver's Reader's Guide to African Literature (1972), Dathorne's African Literature of the Twentieth Century (1976), Roscoe's Mother is Gold (1971) and Uhuru's Fire (1977), Herdeck's African Authors (1973), and Abrash's Black African Literature in English Since 1952 (1967) contain lists of the majority of the published African novelists. These books have been

used as basic references to identify which novelists to include in the overview of African novels written in English. However, books such as Seymour-Smith's Funk and Wagnall's Guide to Modern World Literature (1973), Hayman's The Novel Today 1967-75 (1976), Stanford and Amin's Black Literature for High School Students (1978) and Vinson's Contemporary Novelists (1976) provide a more restricted list of novelists and novels that are recognized as having literary significance and/or literary merit. These references have been used to help select those novels that may be appropriate for use in high school. Some novels that do not appear on any of the restricted lists mentioned may still be selected if they offer material to the student that is both appealing and rich in possibilities for literary study.

The various means through which to assess and select African novels written in English have been established. These guidelines will be applied in Chapter Three so that from the presentation of the overview of the African novels it will become clear which novels provide the greatest possibilities for use in high school English classes.

CHAPTER III

OVERVIEW OF AFRICAN NOVELS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH

King (1974), Laurence (1968), Palmer (1972), Dathorne (1975), and Roscoe (1971 and 1977) each discuss the increasing interest of scholars and critics around the world in African literature. The variety in the African literary outpouring in the past twenty-five years has caused more than a passing stir among those whose knowledge of literature had confirmed the stability of various literary forms. Yet, tremors felt from African creative endeavors have challenged readers and critics to view with openness the diverse literary expressions of African writers. The bulk of the initial wave came from West Africa, Nigeria in particular, where Amos Tutuola startled the literary public with his linguistically distinct The Palm-Wine Drinkard. Chinua Achebe rose to prominence with his tragic Things Fall Apart and Cyprian Ekwensi gained attention because of his concentration on producing "popular" literature for the masses in Nigerian urban areas.

Novelists soon emerged all over Nigeria and West Africa, budding writers who frequently were unaware of the differences among journalistic reports, social or political tracts, and literature. Consequently, the quality of the emerging novels varied from excellent portrayals of the individual struggling with a conflict that threatened to overwhelm him to journalistic reporting of societal and historical events, and personal accounts of attempts to find new paths in a changing society. This early literature received little objective criticism and so opened a deluge of self-expression with

little overt regard for or understanding of literary quality.

East African novelists were late-comers to the creative writing scene. Concern over the land issue and the emphasis on the use of precise English caused a more functional type of prose to emerge that had outlets in newspapers and journals. Writing skills developed as an outlet for frustration rather than from imaginative stimulation. It was not until the late sixties when some of the West African novels found their way to East African readers that individuals began to see the potential for imaginative writing.

South Africa, too, has had a retarded creative growth. Since political issues dominate the minds of South African writers, imaginative concerns have virtually been set aside. Most South African writers are forced to live in exile because they have little freedom of expression within the boundary of their homeland. Virtually all their efforts are taken up with publicizing the plight of their black countryman in journalistic, tract or semi-autobiographical format.

Circumstances, then, have fostered the uneven and staggered development of fiction in English by African writers. Reed (1965) suggests this process of readiness also has a repetition factor built in.

> It [Africa] is a continent of repetitions. What is happening in one country now is likely to have happened already in another and will probably happen again somewhere else. The rise of nationalism, the process of decolonization, developments in new governments, the tensions before and after independence between the tribal and the modern, throughout the whole of Africa — it is not a single continuous story, but very similar stories told over and over again. (i)

The overview which follows briefly summarizes the concerns that have affected, to some extent, the literary achievements of the novelists to be presented. Novelists are arranged alphabetically by region for convenience of discussion and the novelists of historical significance are presented first to indicate a cross-section of the literary development that occurred. Each novel is described briefly and connections, where appropriate, are made to other novels or emerging trends. The overview concludes with the identification of major trends that are developing in the literature and the selection of the novels for possible use in high school English classes.

West African Novelists

West African novelists were the first of Africa's contemporary artists who write in English to receive critical attention. Nigeria is considered the cradle of African novel writing in English and Amos Tutuola is acknowledged as the first modern African novelist in English after the publication of The Palm-Wine Drinkard in 1952.

Factors that influenced the rapid rise of creative writing in Nigeria and neighboring Ghana are many. Laurence (1968), King (1974), and Izevbaye (1974) have suggested that the main influence for a solid literary development in West Africa is the inner strength and confidence of the people. The tradition from which many writers come is an absorptive one. When the colonizers arrived attempts were made to include the new technology and modes of behavior in the existing framework. The colonial period was viewed as a time that did separate several generations from their past, but is being

assessed by writers as a period where social, cultural and religious changes were made and not a time of racial affront. Further, there was no separation from the land during the colonial period, so traditional practices were continued.

The early learning of English as the language of the educated and the development of West African English by putting vernacular concepts and ideas into English sentence patterns allowed for greater understanding among tribes and between literate and non-literate people. The rise of universities, literary journals like Black Orpheus and the influence of men such as Beier, Janz, and Dathorne all effected the rapid rise of interest in and outlets for imaginative writing. Lastly, the willingness to look at one's weaknesses and criticize both self and society played an enormous part in causing readers and writers to look at the existing situation and move towards change. Each of these factors has aided the rapid development of quality literature from West Africa.

Most early writing in West Africa centered on a detailed examination of culture and its effect on individuals. The purposes of the early novels appeared to be the construction of bridges from the wealth of traditional life, through the consideration of the confused components of the present, into a future that would meld the appropriate components of each. These spokesmen challenged themselves to take the input from diverse experiences and blend them into artistic outpourings that would show their readers how valuable tradition is.

Early West African Novelists

Chinua Achebe has dual aims as a writer: to instruct his people and to expose and attack injustice. His first three novels

present problems faced by man with conflicting values and expectations between the past and present. By implication, his major audience is assumed to be African as he is attempting to re-establish belief in the past. Achebe portrays changes in terms of an intensely powerful individual character who is also a representative of his people in his traditional attitudes. His fourth novel attends to Achebe's second purpose, to expose and attack injustice. Achebe presents a situation where the injustices of the colonizers are now being cynically carried on by the newly independent leaders.

Things Fall Apart, Achebe's first novel, published in 1958, centres on Okonkwo, a man whose driving force pushes him to attain as much recognition as possible through physical means, the achievement of titles and self-denial. Behind this relentless pursuit of advancement is the disrespect he had for his father, Unoka and the fear he had that his tribe might consider him like his father. Surrounding the struggle that focuses on Okonkwo is the coming of the European government officials and missionaries who attempt to institute change in Okonkwo's tribe.

> Achebe creates a hero of fiction, a convincing man with strange old world qualities. Because Achebe imaginatively brings his world to life, one can believe in Okonkwo's values and because the values matter the message of the novel becomes important, relevant and convincing. (Dathorne, 1976, 68)

No Longer At Ease (1963), Achebe's second novel, is essentially an extension of Things Fall Apart. Obi, Okonkwo's grandson, returns to Nigeria after attending university in England. He is full of new ideas and wants to see his country free of corruption. His troubles

begin when the Umofia Progressive Union, the group who funded his overseas education, demand repayment of his loan and expect that he will continue to live up to the standard expected of a government man. Obi tries to be both tribesman and individual, and succeeds at neither.

Arrow of God (1964) returns to a setting in the past where Ezeulu, a village priest, battles with his god and seeping modernity. He sends his son to a mission school to learn the secrets of the strangers who had invaded his land. Yet, when a messenger comes from Winterbottom, the European district officer, and does not treat Ezeulu with the expected respect, Ezeulu ignores a summons and becomes imprisoned. Ezeulu retaliates by delaying the harvest. He does not foresee the ramifications of his lack of tolerance and is unable to cope with the disasters that strike his family and tribe. Achebe, again, remains detached in the presentation of the conflicting situation. He probes more deeply into the mind of his main character, Ezeulu, and the reader sees the disintegration of a man whose god upholds the clan rather than the individual.

Achebe's fourth novel, A Man of the People (1966), takes a different approach to the events occurring around him. Now, Achebe attacks corruption and greed in places of authority. Chief Nanga, a corrupt politician, invites Odili, the principal character, to visit him in Lagos. Odili accepts and becomes embroiled in the tangled events surrounding Chief Nanga's political party, his girl friend and a fixed election. Odili's obsession with reversing the misuse of power allows Chief Nanga to come across as the more reasonable character and the victor.

The novels of Chinua Achebe each deal with the conflicting pat-

tern of cultures. They imply a certain unnaturalness in man's supposed ease in moving between two cultures. The author builds the myth of the man of two worlds suffering from excruciating inner stress and liable to abandon his learning and modernity in a crisis situation. Achebe's strength lies in the ability to call up a credible world, stand away from it, and leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Tibble's (1965) assessment of Achebe is most apt.

> He does not try to offer any larger-than-life or any over-simple solution to the mortal conflict among human values. The sifting of these issues, his packed and dramatic stories seem to suggest, forms part of life's perpetual challenge to our race. (111)

T. M. Aluko, an engineer by profession, brings a sense of humor to his fiction. Aluko degrades the conflicts that are part of society's attempt to come to terms with outside forces. One Man, One Wife (1959) focuses on the struggle in a village between traditional religion and Christianity. The Reverends David and Royasin, the novel's main characters, are caricatures: one laughable, the other too solemn. The action centres on numerous incredible incidents; characters are irrationally killed off and there is no centrality to the plot.

One Man, One Matchet (1964) makes a clearer statement. This novel presents a picture of the difficulties of government officials during the transfer of power from colonial to an independent state. A young agricultural officer orders the destruction of some diseased cocoa trees. The farmers, who feel the government is against them and working with some traditional enemies, oppose the destruction

plan. The new Nigerian officer sides with the agricultural officer. This results in violence and chaos before calm is restored. There are fewer characters and fewer episodes than in One Man, One Wife, but little depth of perception.

Kinsman and Foreman (1966) describes a personal situation, a clash between a new engineer and the foreman of the Public Works Department who is both a corrupt relation and a prominent member of the community. The autobiographical nature of the story makes it superficial and lacking in literary quality.

In 1970 Chief, The Honorable Minister appeared. This novel focuses its satire upon government officials and highlights the meaninglessness of government. The ministers are stereotypic and the titles they possess are their only identity. Aluko is well-known for his support of the ordinary man. He constantly satirizes traditional patterns of living, bad politics and individuals who use their positions for personal gain while the ordinary citizen is misled and taken advantage of. His journalistic style is full of action, but leaves little to be inferred or interpreted by the reader. If light, rambling, and episodic farces are appealing, Aluko's novels provide easy reading.

Cyprian Ekwensi is considered the popular novelist of Nigeria. "Readers of Nigerian writing — Nigerian creative writing — must be those who are willing to read simply for pleasure and entertainment first, and for education and knowledge incidentally" (Ekwensi, 1965, 217). Ekwensi views himself as an entertainer. He started his writing career as a pamphleteer near Onitsha, an eastern Nigerian town. He tried to reach the man in the street by writing about the

concerns of the masses. Much of the material centered on love relationships which had complications such as raping, pregnancies, unsupportive fathers and abortions before the unfulfilled ending to the relationship occurred.

Ekwensi appears to intentionally distort customs and steep them in sex, adventure and mystery so they will make popular reading. Of his five adult novels: People of the City (1954), Jagua Nana (1961), Burning Grass (1962), Beautiful Feathers (1963) and Iska (1966), Jagua Nana is his best known. It depicts an aging prostitute who befriends Freddie, a young teacher. She promises to send him to England, but disaster intervenes and she loses her lover. Later, she returns to Lagos and wins £50,000. The values presented are superficial; the tone and style are urbane and the popular theme is written for the masses with little concern for literary quality.

Ekwensi's other novels are equally lacking in credibility, show superficial relationships and are devoid of successful plot development. However, these techniques used by Ekwensi are intentional. His stated purpose is to depict aspects of African cities undergoing the tremors of transition. If the city is a corrupting influence, it will be shown at the lowest level — that level which catches the unaware who come to the city innocent of what to expect. To ensure that his readers understand the subject area about which he writes is Ekwensi's first concern. Whether it has an African aura or African authenticity is irrelevant to sharing the situation and its effects with the widest possible group of readers. Thus, Ekwensi achieves his purpose as an effective author of popular lit-

erature and deserves his place in the historical treatment of the development of African novels written in English.

Onuora Nzekwu is also among the first wave of novelists. His novels are concerned with the adjustment between two civilizations as were those of Achebe and Ekwensi. However, Nzekwu does not seem to be able to get beyond the sensationalism of Ekwensi or the anthropological and sociological concerns of traditional society.

Wand of Noble Wood (1961) concerns itself with tribal marriage customs and traditions. The main character has saved the bride price, but cannot take a wife until his elder brothers do. When he does find a woman of whom his family approves, she is found dead on the morning of the wedding. Nzekwu appears more concerned with documenting tradition than with creating a situation in which an individual character must face the realities of a curse that has been tampered with. The author uses the main character as a mouthpiece through which to present his position on various issues. Hence, there is little plausibility.

Blade Among the Boys (1962) continues the theme of conflicting cultures. Patrick Ikenga, the central character, has been educated by Europeans and intends to become a priest. The decision horrifies the family for celibacy is a curse. Patrick vacillates, but ends up conforming to tradition after a love potion causes him to succumb to Nkiru who becomes pregnant. Nzekwu has recorded the kernel of an issue important to the African family, but rather than create a story, he simply tells the events in disjointed fashion using unimaginative language.

Highlife for Lizards (1965) is Nzekwu's most ambitious novel. The events centre on Agom and her desire to fulfil her obligations as a wife. When she continues to be barren, Udezue, her husband, marries a second wife. Antagonisms develop and after both wives bear children, the second is driven from the household. The remainder of the novel describes events in which business prospers and titles are acquired. Again, the ritual of childbearing is the important feature of the novel. After success in this dimension is assured, all other aspects of life blossom. Conversations are flat and reader interest is not held through this novel, but Nzekwu does manage to consistently develop the character of Agom throughout for her position in the husband-wife relationship alters in the various sections of the novel.

Gabriel Okara, best known as a poet, has explored the contemporary scene with The Voice (1964). This piece of experimental prose reveals the hero, Okolo, as a modern dissenter searching after *it*. His formal education completed, Okolo returns home with visions of how his nearly independent society can be reborn. His lofty vision is shattered when he views the bankruptcy of his village which has replaced its traditionally humanistic values for those of materialism learned from the white man.

Following the pattern of the quest, the novel depicts the expulsion of Okolo from his village, his search and later return. Essentially universal in nature, Okara's theme challenges the modern African to set aside the materialism he has grasped from the colonizers and to develop a way of life that has real meaning. The elusive *it* which Okolo is after, is that which will provide some

meaning for him. Okara draws on the oral tradition through the presentation of the journay. Images of light and dark reflect the struggle of past and present providing a pessemistic picture of life. Although short, The Voice is powerful and bold in its deviation from the usual pattern of West African novels.

Amos Tutuola, the novelist mentioned earlier as the first to publish a modern African novel in English, links the oral storytelling tradition with the imaginative translation of those oral stories into written form. Tutuola's characters are not on the threshold of a cultural dilemma as the characters of Achebe or Nzekwu are. Rather Tutuola's characters move between life and death, bush and town, superstition and materialism with a dexterity that could leave the unaware mind in confusion.

The Palm-Wine Drinkard (1952) depicts a man who is addicted to drinking palm-wine. He goes in search of his friend, a dead palm-wine tapper. During his search he encounters Death, the Skull, Drum, Song, and Dance. He marries, has a child, changes himself into a canoe and with his wife operates a ferry to obtain money with which to continue his travels. They experience more adventures before they reach "Deads Town" where the dead palm-wine tapper is. After a visit the tapper gives the couple an "egg" and they start the return journey. Numerous adventures are again encountered, but they arrive home in time to save the man's town from famine with the help of the magic egg.

Tutuola's writing represents an intentional attempt to blend folklore and mythology with modern life. The adventures presented allow the protagonist to grow as a person and allow Tutuola to

integrate folklore into the novel. The novelist expands, distorts and summarizes as he feels necessary to advance the novel's plot. Part of Tutuola's success lies in the use of language which is neither standard English nor raw Pidgin. The broken English used reflects the level of understanding of the English language by the characters. It is neither "quaint" as suggested by some early non-African critics noted in Moore (1962) nor a point for embarrassment as seen by fellow Nigerians.

The quest aspect portrayed in The Palm-Wine Drinkard is reminiscent of everyman's search for his past, for his fantasies, for meaning in his life. Other searches run through Tutuola's later novels: My Life in the Bush of Ghosts (1954), Simbi and the Satyr of the Dark Jungle (1955), The Brave African Huntress (1958), and Feather Woman of the Jungle (1962).

My Life in the Bush of Ghosts and Simbi and the Satyr of the Dark Jungle pose ethical problems. The boy in the former searches for the meaning of "good" while a spoiled rich girl in the latter discovers the meaning of poverty. Both novels illustrate the process of growing up or the transition from innocence to awareness of life's turbulence.

The Brave African Huntress and Feather Woman of the Jungle deal with sensational adventure. In the first, a girl develops a tremendous ability to hunt and rescues her brothers from the Jungle of the Pygmies. The latter novel recounts stories told by an old chief to his people for ten nights. These four novels use folkloric and mythological elements and the narration of the African storyteller, but lack the coherence and force of The Palm-Wine Drinkard.

The six novelists surveyed are the early writers of African fiction in English. All are from Nigeria and have led creative artists in building the awareness of the value of tradition and of the turmoil within the transitional period in which they live. More recent African novelists continue the tradition of documenting village life, expressing the sensational, elaborating on the theme of the divided man and experimenting with language use.

More Recent West African Novelists

More Than One (1967), a novel by Clement Agunwa, centres on a businessman who fails to obtain an education because he wants to be immersed in the traditional aspects of village life and fears teachers. Nwakor becomes a respected trader who is able to purchase titles for his parents, and amasses relative wealth, but has to have others read to him, write for him and keep his accounts. The result is obvious and Nwakor blames his troubles on a lack of education. The rise and fall of a respected community man, the description of village life and the search for education have all been more successfully attempted by others.

Elechi Amadi derives some of his subject matter from folklore. Concubine (1966) reveals the story of a woman destined for unhappiness. Ihuoma is controlled by the spirits, a water-spirit in particular, so everything she attempts is prejudged and the outcome decided before the actions are carried through. The insignificance of man is definitely felt through the cardboard-like caricatures who are presented like robots. Ihuoma brings suffering and death to all her lovers; for although she is a beautiful and virtuous woman, she

is the wife of the sea god.

Great Ponds (1969), Amadi's second novel, is a more successful detailing of a war between two tribes who both want the right to fish Wangaba Pond. The gods are called in to settle the tribal conflict after men are killed. Olumba, a warrior, becomes the personification of the conflict. If he lives for six months one tribe claims the pond, if not the other gains the fishing rights. Attempts on his life follow. Eventually he drowns himself in Wangaba Pond contaminating it for all time. The surprise ending and the use of folktale to point out the necessity for cooperation and to highlight the evils of greed make this novel readable.

Ayi Kwei Armah represents a change of direction in West African novelists. The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born (1968) is Armah's presentation of corruption, greed and hypocrisy in the civil service of Ghana. The Man is different. His refusal to be drawn into the accepted way of life draws the anger of his wife and mother-in-law and the disgust of his co-workers. Graft and indebtness are the means to apparent success. Armah reveals the corruption through powerful and nauseating images. Symbols which bind the novel together are filth and excrement.

Journeys to and from various latrines or the dwelling on an excessive filth symbolizes the various attempts to draw the Man in, to show the Man's own wavering in his chosen stance or to portray the depth to which a person such as Koomson is willing to go to maintain a facade of success. Koomson, a former fellow student and a politician who is the embodiment of corruption, is defeated, together with his political party, late in the novel. Koomson comes to the

Man for help and escape is made through a latrine hole. When Koomson is ruined by his own corruption, the Man feels vindicated.

Armah's continual references to urine, faeces, and nasal mucus are intended to shock his readers into realizing the repulsive quality of corruption. Overt description of bodily functions portray the level of the marks left by government on society. The control effected by the imagery is complete. There is no relief. Armah's descriptive ability is evident. His use of style and language is individual, somewhat radical and frank.

Fragments (1970) and Why Are We So Blest? (1970) are also realistic. Fragments concerns itself with a student who returns to his village after several years in America, only to find his people eagerly adopting Western ways and values while ignoring the spiritual wealth in their traditional background. In the third novel, Why Are We So Blest?, the subject is freedom fighting, but the difference between what is emphasized in theory and what happens in practice in the revolution causes discord. In both novels defeat occurs because of the differences in outlook of the groups of people involved.

Bediako Asare's Rebel (1969) and Kofi Awooner's This Earth, My Brother (1971) lack probability. In Rebel a group of people in an isolated village fight their village priest's authority to retain the traditional rites and rituals. After the priest is killed, Shabani arrives and changes all of the village practices to those of "civilized" society. On the other hand, This Earth, My Brother portrays the return from England of a Ghanaian lawyer who finds Africa so drastically changed that after he wallows in nostalgia for sometime, he drowns himself. The portrayal of individuals and groups that

cannot cope with change in each novel negates the very characteristics which have made West Africans a resilient people.

Mbella Dipoko is an oddity among West African novelists who write in English. He appears to be an outsider, a French outsider who enjoys laughing at events. His two novels, A Few Nights and Days (1966) and Because of Women (1969) focus on relationships between men and women. The nature of interracial love and sexual promiscuity permeate the first while the second revolves around a man who wants a large family, but who beats his wife while pregnant on the assumption that to feel beauty one must have tragedy. Again lack of probability and the portrayal of a very selective world gives the novels limited appeal.

Amu Djoleto's The Strange Man (1967) and Cameron Duodu's The Gab Boys (1967) are interesting and enjoyable depictions of young boys growing up. The Strange Man is an account of one man's reminiscence of his boyhood pranks, youthful adventures and mature responsibilities. The Gab Boys reveals the experiences of a group of half-educated teenage boys who idle their time away. When the hero gets a job he starts passing judgements on the greed, hypocrisy and crudity of his superiors. Although portions of both novels are humorous, a lack of depth and inappropriate shifts in language use leave the novels open to substantial criticism.

Chukwuemeka Ike's writing is both satirical and humorous. He has no particular issue to fight about, but in his portrayal of individuals becoming educated he satirizes religion, education, politics and the "nouveau riche". Toads For Supper (1965) is a comedy about Amadi, a university student, who becomes entangled with three women. The events cover three years of his university life while

Amadi searches out his place in the changing society. The university life created by Ike reveals a microcosm through which to examine the foibles and failings of the larger African world. Yoruba and Ibo customs are presented as the characters move from one tribal area to another while attempting to sort out the possibilities of intertribal marriage. A light novel which provides insights in an engaging manner, Toads For Supper is a successful satire.

The Naked Gods (1970) and The Potter's Wheel (1973) continue the humorous accounts of student life. British and American educators wage battle over what type of education is suitable for Songhai University in The Naked Gods while a small boy's educational involvements after he is sent to a "boarding" school to salvage his character are detailed in The Potter's Wheel. While very readable, neither The Naked Gods nor The Potter's Wheel reveal issues of major concern to Africans.

Samuel Konadu, another popular writer, much like Ekwensi, is concerned with urban situations and traditional ritual. In his novels he is concerned about his "home" audience and presents events and rituals with little plot development. Ordained by the Oracle (1968) describes funeral ceremonies; Shadow of Wealth (1966) exposes corruption in the city; Night Watchers of Korlebu (1968) deals with dead spirits and their interaction with the living; A Woman in Her Prime (1967) is concerned with the question of the childless woman and what she can do with a barren life.

John Munonye writes with religion in mind. Only Son (1966) depicts the divergent viewpoints held by mother and son because of religious differences. The conflict which deals with the familiar

attempt to cope with two cultures is attributed to the son's education. Obi (1969), a more successful novel by Munonye focuses on Joe and Anna and their experiences in a changing society. The main characters are Christians who return to village life to continue the homestead. The members of the extended family and the church play significant parts in the book. Change in the African society is embedded in the conflict between Christian and traditional religious worship and incorporated into daily life. Oil Man of Obange (1971) portrays a man who abandons the ways of his tribe and joins the Christian church. Jeremiah is determined to provide an education for all his children, but tragedy begins to plague him with the death of his wife.

Mununye uses direct, descriptive language through his novels. His characters are highly principled and believable but there is a one-sided reliance on the virtues of Christianity to solve all difficulties.

Nkem Nwankwo's Danda (1964) is a comic presentation of character and situation. The theme is serious, but the manner of presentation reflects the character who is wayward, clown-like and enjoys the good life. Danda is reminiscent of Ukoka in Achebe's Things Fall Apart, an engaging misfit. As Margaret Laurence (1968) comments

> Danda is, in fact, the classic rebel of comedy. His battles against the rigid and stolid establishment are fought with the weapons of impudence, not anger, and liberation is achieved through laughter rather than painful struggle. (185)

The narrative mode in Danda reflects Danda's character. It is conversational and easy. The dance-like rhythm in the writing parallels the uninhibited movement and quality in Danda's progress

through life. The clash between cultures is taken for granted and both Danda's father and the home society accept Danda's paradoxical nature. He dislikes the rituals attached to marriage and taking titles, so Danda runs away breaking the traditional social codes. When his father dies Danda returns to lead life in his own way. The lively presentation of character marks the reason for Danda's success.

My Mercedes Is Bigger Than Yours (1975), Nwankwo's second novel, presents the downfall of Onuma. Onuma, a man who has amassed considerable wealth, returns to his village after an absence of fifteen years, in a Jaguar. His money quickly dissipates and dependence on materialism causes him to play political candidates against each other in an approaching election as a means to replenish his supply of money. As a result of this behavior Onuma is beaten and eventually shoots his cousin, then drives away in a Mercedes.

Nwankwo's wit and humor viewed in Danda has turned to bitter satire. My Mercedes Is Bigger Than Yours is as readable as Danda, but is not as amusing. Character portrayal and language use are less effective in this second novel.

Flora Nwapa's Efuru (1966) and Idu (1970) deal with women in difficult situations. The barren woman is unimaginatively presented in Efuru. Like Ihuoma in Amadi's The Concubine Efuru is controlled by the spirits of the deep and cannot marry or bear children. Therefore, her tragedy is expected. Idu revolves around the birth, marriage and death rituals with the woman passively accepting her expected position in relationships. The women portrayed in the novels are good women, but they do nothing to alter events. The novels reveal much about everyday life among the Ibos, but provide

no action or excitement.

Isidore Okpewho, Lenrie Peter, and Adaora Ulasi write about the achievement of balance in society. Each has limited strengths and exemplifies a trait similar to the earlier West African novelists. Okpewho's Victims (1970) explores "the theory of the harmonious" (Dathorne, 1976, 117) using language flavored with proverbs and local translations. His approach is reminiscent of Achebe, although more solemn and melodramatic. Dr. Kawa, the main character in Peter's Second Round (1965), has everything a person could desire, yet is a lonely man. He participates in the world through his mother and mistress, but essentially does not understand society. Dr. Kawa's poetic inclination helps the exploration of his feelings as a balance is established between the tragedies and joys of life. Peter's work is reminiscent of Okara, who is essentially a poet. Many Things You No Understand (1970) is a humorous portrayal of African magic and the restrictions of the British administration. Ulasi imitates Ekwensi in her desire to amuse, both in Many Things You No Understand and Many Things Begin For Change (1972). Ulasi, who builds humor through contrived dialogue and situation, produces material that is very readable and appealing to the popular audience.

The novelists of West Africa have not remained static. They appear to be building on the strengths of the early writers and are developing greater control in their use of language. This exploratory period has been characterized by aspiring novelists who have tried many approaches, topics and points of view through which to portray what is occurring in Africa. Although the quality of the novels vary greatly, more recent West African novelists are to be

credited for their persistence to find appropriate ways to express their concerns.

East African Novelists

Killam (1974), King (1974), and Rubadiri (1971) each mention the recent development of writing in East Africa. Until very recently Ngugi wa Thiong'o was thought by many writers and critics to be a West African because African novelists all seem to come from West Africa. Reasons for the later development of creative writing in English in East Africa are several. East Africans had both an administrative and a land upheaval. When the British administration came, it came with settlers who expropriated land that belonged to family and tribal groups. As a result of the East African separation from the land, the writers are concerned with championing a revival of the spirit of the inner man and with advocating freedom in their creative endeavors. Strong condemnation is heaped on European accoutrements for they are regarded as vehicles for suggesting superiority. The East African, therefore, has had a wider separation from his traditional culture to bridge than the West African. Rubadiri (1971) points to the acquiring of English as the language of communication as being another drawback.

> For instance, if one passed through a secondary school in East Africa, the best one came out with was an ability to be able to write a composition or a letter in the best basic English and the best grammar that was demanded of one. If you wanted to publish something there were no publishing facilities. . . . So that as the struggle for independence came, people began to get frustrated and instead of writing creatively as we know it now, they started to write — mainly using newspapers. (149)

It was only after independence that the oral tradition began to be taken seriously again and precision in writing "standard" English relaxed so that an East African English began to develop. However, the African flavor in the language used in East African writing is not as apparent as that which permeates West African writing because there has been a definite attempt to use Swahili as the language of governmental and intertribal communication. Only in the late 1960s did scripts and texts from West Africa arrive in East African countries causing the rekindling of excitement for imaginative writing.

East African novelists learned from the early West African novelists as did the newer West African authors. This has resulted in less emphasis on the presentation of the value of tradition and more keying in on issues which expose injustices. The appearance of numerous novels in the last few years gives substance to Rubadiri's (1971) claim that East African writing would produce in the next decade something as exciting as that which has developed in West Africa.

Khadamki Asalache's A Calabash of Life (1967) is the story of a warrior who is attempting to repossess the chieftaincy which was stolen from his family. The author builds the reader's belief in the warrior and his extended family through incidents that enhance the conflict and make the victorious resolution believable. The novel develops epic character qualities in the warrior and implies the enemy lacks the heroic qualities, so is bound to be defeated.

Legson Kayira, a Malawian, writes with detachment. His prose takes us close to scenes and characters, but causes little involvement in the issues presented. The non-political tone in his novels make them a refreshing change in their lighter depiction of people

and events. The Looming Shadow (1967) shows an attempt at compromise when Musyani, one of the main characters, is charged with practicing witchcraft. The village headman undertakes the task of trying to balance the traditional method of punishing witches with the skeptical approach of the outside administrators.

Jingala (1969) further attends to the question of traditional and modern practices when Gregory, Jingala's son, decides he would rather be a priest than marry. The son's decision causes Jingala great consternation, just as a similar decision caused the same reaction in Nzekwu's Blade Among the Boys. According to his father, Gregory should come home as a living monument to his father's status in the village, when he completes his education. Celibacy is also considered unacceptable, for a man must ensure the continuation of the family line. Jingala's antics, including a march on the seminary dressed in loin cloth and carrying an axe, are the central focus of the book. Kayira's skill in dialogue, characterization, description and portrayal of conflict bring the old man to life. Unlike other African comic figures, Jingala revels in revealing the complex mixture of strengths and weaknesses that make up real human beings. The resolution seems unsatisfactory, but perhaps appropriate in a time when uncertainties about the future of tradition abound.

With The Civil Servant (1972), Kayira moves to an urban setting. George and his clerk, Demero, are modern, western-trained employees of the government who want some excitement while desiring few responsibilities. The plot centres on Isabella, George's lover. The portrayal of rural poverty as compared to city life and the extent

to which Isabella goes to achieve a more satisfying life provide a disillusioning picture of how people are coping with societal change.

Leonard Kibera's Voices in the Dark (1970) is a novel of hope and despair. Gerald Timundu who is disillusioned with university life turns to playwriting as a means through which to attack the society which surrounds him. The portrayal of an angry old Mama Njeri who represents the older generation and the continued struggle for recovery of the land by the freedom fighters suggest that all hope is not lost. Kibera's few characters are effectively developed and symbols are used to exemplify the extreme positions taken by Timundu. Kibura has attempted a new type of novel in Voices in the Dark by combining techniques from the short story, poetry and drama. It is an interesting, but stylistically complex novel.

Bonnie Lubega, Charles Mangua and Stephen Ngubiah use unusual means by which to unify their novels. Outcasts (1971) by Lubega is about Karekyezi, a peasant who systematically steals newborn calves from the villages because he wants to set his family free. The villagers look upon Karekyezi as an uncivilized savage because he tends their cattle. When he is dismissed by the villagers, he is a totally frustrated, rich outcast. Although scant on plot, the storyline is held together with images of dung, urine, and other stinking odors. Faintly reminiscent of Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born, Outcasts lacks the control and force of Armah's novel.

Mangua's Son of Woman (1970) portrays the amoral side of life. Dodge Kuineju, the son of a whore, seduces a young girl, is sent to a mission school, loses several jobs and winds up in prison. Faintly

reminiscent of Nwankwo's Danda, Dodge enjoys his socially inappropriate behavior. Mangua uses obsenities which are part of Dodge's vocabulary and lifestyle as the means to integrate subject matter and style.

Ngubiah's A Curse From God (1971) depicts a man who has broken from the Christian church while in the throes of deciding to take a second wife. Karuga's first wife violently disagrees with the proposal, but loses the battle. The second wife exemplifies the opposite characteristics of the first (who is presented as the epitomy of goodness) and causes numerous problems to erupt. Since Ngubiah's purpose is to stress that Christianity is superior to African beliefs, most events in the novel are linked to a Christian precept.

Next to Achebe, James Ngugi (or Ngugi wa Thiong'o, his traditional name by which he prefers to be known), is most widely accepted as a writer who has mastered the novelist's art. His writing is far different than that of his West African counterparts. Ngugi is totally immersed in the struggle for freedom in Kenya and portrays the destructive effects that outside dominance has had on the East African way of life.

Weep Not, Child (1964) presents the anguish of family breakup during the Kenyan struggle for independence. The novel's events are presented through the eyes of Njoroge, the youngest son of Ngotho. Ngotho and Mr. Howlands are vying for the same land. Njoroge attends school as this is considered the way to gain status. Through his schooling and his friendship with Mwihaki, the daughter of Jacobo, a rich landowner, he becomes aware of the independence movement. As strikes begin, Njoroge realizes he is involved in the crisis since his family is directly affected. Through a series of incidents part

of the family is arrested, part imprisoned, part goes into hiding and eventually Ngotho confesses to murder to save his son's life. Eventually, Njoroge must look after the family, but the responsibility is almost too much to bear.

In Weep Not, Child Ngugi dramatizes the human dilemma of ordinary people consumed by the Kenyan struggle for independence. There are no heroes, only pain-bearers. His language is simple, direct and empathetic.

The River Between was written before Weep Not, Child but published in 1965. The clash between two cultures is described through the conflict of two tribes who face each other across a river valley. One tribe, the Makuya, participates in Christianity, while the Kameno tribe rejects the new religion. The mission school refuses to accept non-Christians, so the leader of the Kameno, Waiyaki, becomes the champion of tradition and attempts to build western schools for children in his tribe. Waiyaki, however, becomes involved with the deacon's daughter and the clear lines separating the tribes and their beliefs become clouded. Confusion develops as a result of lack of understanding about what is happening within the societies.

Ngugi returns to the independence issue with A Grain of Wheat (1968). Many characters are introduced and Ngugi shows, through various episodes, how their pasts have influenced each other and how their present is a facade. The variety of apparently independent episodes form a complex frame from which the central theme is developed. Ngugi shows how tribal distrust exists, how corruption is setting in with graft, yet implies that honesty will help the tribe free itself. With exceptional warmth and penetration Ngugi reveals

a people who are caring and about whom he is deeply concerned.

Ngugi's recent novel, Petals of Blood (1977), extends beyond the post-independence issues of A Grain of Wheat, but retains the same complex structure of character portrayal. The theme is developed through the flashback technique and the actions of Munira, Karega, Abdulla and Wanja who, in various ways, are striving to establish a new order for their country. The interweaving of various tenets of Christianity, Capitalism and Socialism make this novel Ngugi's most obvious political statement. Petals of Blood reveals the anger of a people who have lost their land, their innocence, and for many, their hope. It is a strong denunciation of the Western World.

Okello Oculi's Prostitute (1968) is a nameless representation of all such women. A variety of incidents are presented: relationships with clients, attitude toward abortion, attempts to communicate with her mother, recollections of a childhood friend. All the scenes lead the reader through the squalid life and destiny of the prostitute.

Grace Ogot's concern for the African woman is revealed in The Promised Land (1967) which explores the duties a woman must perform for her husband in a married relationship. Nyapol, the central character, is well developed and saves the story from being an utter failure due to a scant plot. Although the portrayal of the passive role of women in African society is recurring, the theme is not effectively treated by Amadi, Nwapa or Ogot.

Peter Palangyo, a Tanzanian, writes with the poverty-stricken in mind. His strength as a writer seems to lie in his tragic vision. Dying in the Sun (1969) is a novel of alienation and loneliness. Everyone is either ill or dying in the novel, dying because the

people don't belong, dying because they are misfits. The plot centres on Ntanya's father, a man whose illness is unclear, but who is plaguing everything around him. Eventually he dies and Ntanya meets Teresa in a bar where he is attempting to understand his father's death. Life begins again and the novel ends on a euphoric note. Palangyo's abrupt change of pace breaks the tone and theme of the novel.

No Bride Price (1967) by David Rubadari focuses on Lombe's love for Miria, a village girl, who is pregnant with his child, and the consequences of continuing such a relationship for he is a civil servant. Eventually Lombe marries Sandra, but encounters Miria several times when he goes to his village. Melodrama follows when Lombe realized Miria is his half-sister. The intent of this novel is never really clear.

Gabriel Ruhumbika, a Tanzanian, deals with the problem of not belonging in Village in Uhuru (1969). The novel dramatizes the move away from tradition and the lack of a place in which to feel comfortable when that decision is made. Balindi is expelled from teacher's college, cannot settle down to farming, so wanders for sometime. Eventually he realizes the poverty of his people and dedicates himself to developing a better life for them. He is, however, alienated from his village and they regard his attempts at improvement as interference. The pain of transition permeates the novel and Ruhumbiki offers no easy solutions.

Eneriko Seruma presents Miti, a schoolboy who is awakened to what racism is about, in Experience (1970). When Miti leaves his country he becomes involved with drugs, sex and perversion. After deportation and a return home, Miti attempts to sort out the prejudice

he encountered. Prejudice is downplayed in the novel, though, because of the emphasis on sexual matters.

Return to the Shadows (1969) by Robert Serumaga is an account of Joe Musizi, a lawyer-economist who appears to have assimilated two cultures. He feels it is his responsibility to rid his country of coups. Joe is indecisive, though, and cannot follow his plan to any successful end. Everytime a coup occurs he leaves town or hides. The story deteriorates from this point to its conclusion. Its attempt to deal with social ills is reasonable, but the choppy incidents do not allow for continuity of theme development.

Ordeal in the Forest (1968) is Godwin Wachira's attempt to describe the hardships endured during the Kenyan independence struggle by the freedom fighters. It centres on Nundo who learns of the struggle in school, through a club and then as an active participant in the conflict. The story is more of a tract than a novel in that it does not explore the human condition, but reports events with little regard for literary quality.

The East African writers express intense feelings and pursue individual concerns related to and extending from their independence. Most of these writers had read Tutuola and Achebe before embarking on their own creative efforts, so had rid themselves of the need to document traditional practices or to be spokesmen for the group. However, in their desire to quickly develop individual concerns and styles many East African writers have not shown sufficient concern for balance between subject matter and literary technique in their novels.

South African Novelists

South African novelists are again different from either West or East African writers for they are concerned daily with white domination. Most of the black South African writers live in exile for they are not permitted any freedom of expression in their home country. Therefore, the South African writes mainly about race — the problems of everyday life where the Black man is undermined by the racial circumstances in which he finds himself.

Povey (1974) notes that many South Africans have used autobiographical forms. This is perhaps a means through which to express the internal and external torment that black South Africans experience. However, self-penetration and scathing political comment are not enough to give South African writing recognition in the literary arena. Ezekiel Mphahlele (1971) observes, "I'm sick of protest creative writing and our South African situation has become a terrible cliche as literary material" (199). This eminent South African writer and critic's comment is itself an indication of the flavor and quality of the novels to be considered.

Peter Abrahams is the most prolific author in Africa. However, Abrahams did not receive recognition when his first novels appeared in the mid 1940s, so Amos Tutuola retains the honor of being recognized as the author of the first modern African novel written in English, The Palm-Wine Drinkard (1952). Abrahams greatest concerns are the social predicaments of black people and the documentation of man's cruelty to man. Mine Boy (1946) is the study of a boy, Xuma, who comes from the country to town. Xuma is isolated, knowing no one in whose society he lives. His work in the mine is frustrating

until he gains confidence and the white overseers come to depend on him. Xuma grows up in time and recognizes with the aid of Paddy, his boss, that he must think in terms of people — not black people and white people.

Song of the City (1945) and Path of Thunder (1948) deal with the need to come to terms with the new South Africa. In the first novel a boy comes to the city, is drawn into the political world, is arrested and returns to the village. Path of Thunder is more concerned with attempting to find ways for a new fusion of all people. By maintaining apartness Lanny Swartz, the central character, asserts the gap widens and divergent strata are encouraged. Interracial love emerges with devastating results. In all his novels Abrahams uses characters as mouthpieces to put across his viewpoint. A Night of Their Own (1965) describes the uneasy conflict which encompassed the Indian liberation movement in South Africa.

Two of Abrahams' novels are set outside South Africa. This Island Now (1966) is about Jamaica and A Wreath For Udomo (1956) takes place in Pan Africa where freedom is an expectation. Pan Africa symbolizes the unity South Africans within, and in exile from, their homeland are working towards. Udoma achieves freedom for his people, yet won't let them experience that freedom, so he is destroyed.

Even a brief survey of some of Abrahams' writing reveals his concern for the ordinary man. He expresses his idealism and hope, while not pretending to have any answers. His continuing thrust has been to reveal the Black South African predicament and document men's cruelty to man.

Alex La Guma, who was forced out of his country, recounts situations in his novels as if he were a participant not an observer. A Walk in the Night (1962) is concerned about the problems of violence, crime and the means of retribution. Adonis lives in a decrepit tenement. After drinking one night he encounters an old friend and accidentally kills him. White policemen shoot another friend thinking he is the murderer. No concern is shown as a result of the killing of an innocent man.

And a Threefold Cord (1964) and The Stone Country (1967) reveal the suffering of the lonely whether that isolation occurs in a shanty town outside Cape Town or in prison. In And a Threefold Cord Charlie Pauls, the main character, realizes that people cannot go through hardships alone after he suffers when his girl friend is accused of being a prostitute and his family experiences numerous difficulties. Only through a common togetherness can life be endured. The political overtones are obvious.

The Stone Country shows the inhumanity of prison life. Evidence of suffering and frustration appear through graffiti on prison walls. Prison life is a microcosm of the larger prison without. Frequently the prisoners are seen as nonhumans and the identification card, a panacea. Rather hopelessly the reader watches the cruel environment annihilate human endeavour. If La Guma has one key weakness, it is that he cannot let the reader infer from situations; he must spell out with passion his position.

Andreya Masiye's Before Dawn (1971) picks up a West African trait in the documentation of the customs of people who live in a village in the Ciparamba Valley during the 1930s and 1940s. Tradi-

tional customs are portrayed through the life of Kavumba. While Before Dawn may be of documentary interest, there is little concentration on plot or character.

Ezekiel Mphahlele is a well-known South African literary critic. His only novel The Wanderers (1971) recounts the life of Timi, a man who had to flee from South Africa after writing a document unacceptable to officials. The anguish this situation produces is evident for Timi has no place to call home.

Dominic Mulaisho, a Zambian, wrote The Tongue of the Dumb (1971) in which there is a power conflict in a village setting. Lubinda desires to oust Chief Npona, but his schemes fail and he dies. The interesting feature of this novel is its attempt to present conflict within the group.

Within South African novels concern about the plight of the black South African living under the domination of the white overseer is evident. However, the novelists are so aware of the situation, they have difficulty removing themselves from the situation presented so the reader can infer for himself. This practice of telling rather than showing is unfortunate for it lessens the literary impact, but in view of the existing conditions in South Africa, the practice is understandable.

Differences are thus visible among the novels of East, West and South Africa. Each area's writers concern themselves with the issues pertinent and pressing for their society. One thing which emerges very clearly is that for the most part, African novelists are all spokesmen, spokesmen for tribe, group and race.

Trends in African Novels Written in English

Definite trends emerge in an overview of African novels written in English. Initially, African novels written in English reflected aspects of oral folk tales. The pattern of early novels which is borrowed from the design of oral literature — the quest or journey: departure, initiation and the return, is reflected in The Palm-Wine Drinkard, Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God , Jagua Nana and The Voice. Walsh (1973) substantiates this position. "West African literature in English should not be seen as lacking a history but as a natural result of a rich native inheritance in conjunction with an imported literary tradition" (38). Tutuola, Achebe and Nzekwu further link themselves with oral literature through their portrayal of characters who reflect the oral literature sterotype. The family is considered a controlling unit with father honored and feared, and mother revered. The hierarchical positions of tribal organization are recognized. The priest is to be respected as the voice of wisdom and the Council of Elders to be obeyed. Tucker (1967), Golub (1975), Taiwo (1967), Beier (1967), and Larson (1972) agree the initial focus of development in African novels is

> tribal African society, the way of life untouched by European hands. Novels in this category do not glorify, but show respect for the ordered way of life that has past. . . . A literary salute to Africa's achievement before European influence. (Tucker, 1967, 67)

The following stage identified is that of preliminary contact with Europeans. Larson (1972) calls it "a direct confrontation with Western education and urbanization" (279); Tucker (1967) views it as "'Pure' Africa at its point of contact with European custom where

the weakening of African culture and tribal way of life is the central issue" (67) and Taiwo (1967) considers this the anthropological period. Writers are focusing on the disruptive effect of Western culture on African social, political and religious tradition. Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God, Jingala, and Obi centre on these issues.

Later stages of writing portray life at the point of independence and after. Weep Not, Child, Man of the People, A Grain of Wheat, Chief, the Honorable Minister and The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born are representative of this era. Issues in these novels centre on the increasing problems of political and economic stability. They attempt to implant a harsh warning in the minds of their readers concerning the potential for defeat in their countries by their own people. They cry out against the adoption of the residue of British occupation — that of greed, corruption, bureaucratic ineptitude, lack of strong family ties or sense of purpose. Satire is often the vehicle used in this and the following stages of writing.

Eventually, increasing concern is observed in the novels for the individual — where and how he fits into these altering societies. There is an attempt to cope with ways to combine the technical knowledge provided by Europeans with the spirit of humanity and love that emerges from traditional sources. Danda, No Longer at Ease, The Gab Boys, A Woman in Her Prime, Second Round, Toads For Supper, A Son of Kabira, and And a Threefold Cord reveal beginning attempts to explore these issues.

> The African writer has, indeed, been the historian of his continents' increasingly widened outlook on life, moving from a limited, virtually closed-off societal view of the village and the clan to an

> ever-widening world view. (Larson, 1972, 280)

African novelists have compressed into less than two generations what the Western novel took several hundred years to develop. Tucker (1967) and Larson (1972) conclude that it is this level of achievement by African writers that has focused world attention on African, particularly Nigerian, literature. The trend to diversity in themes and methods of presentation and the ability to continually startle, to constantly remain fresh and alive are characteristics that most typically identify African fiction. Not all novelists or novels exemplify the identified stages of development nor a high level of achievement. However, the very fact that some have moved from the situational to individual concerns, from the traditional to modern issues, from adherence to oral language tradition to language experimentation, from explicit to implicit resolutions in their portrayal of the human dilemma, demands our attention.

Selection of Novels For High School Use

Most of the novels outlined contain interesting thematic presentations or unusual approaches through which to unify the situations depicted. However, several novels stand out as representative of the African literary trend which they exemplify and of the issues that are prevalent in the area from which they come. These considerations, together with a recognizable attempt on the part of the novelist to balance the design and execution of the novel with the subject matter, constitute the basis for the selection of novels that may profitably be used for literary study in high school English classes.

No study of African novels written in English would be reasonable without the inclusion of the works of Chinua Achebe. Achebe has gained world-wide recognition for his portrayal of characters struggling to make sense of the changes in the African society in which the character participates. Okonkwo in Things Fall Apart, Obi in No Longer at Ease, Ezeulu in Arrow of God and Odili in Man of the People show Achebe's conscientious attempt to reveal the plight of the individual in a world characterized by uncertainty, pain and violence. All four novels are political and social in nature. If Things Fall Apart and Arrow of God are grouped together they describe the encounters of the traditional Ibo way of life (the rural setting) with the colonizers: the church, the government and trade. The remaining two, No Longer at Ease and Man of the People portray and reflect upon the after effects of these conflicts in the modern state (the urban situation). Achebe's contribution to the development of the African novel cannot be denied.

> His characters have that vital relationship with their social and economic landscape. We can see and feel how his characters, their whole view, their aspirations, have been shaped by a particular environment, in a particular historical phase. . . . By so doing, Achebe has succeeded in giving human dignity to his African characters. (Ngugi, 1971, 7)

Two novelists who exemplify the careful blending of components from oral literature with those of written literature, of mythical concepts with modern concerns are Amos Tutuola and Gabriel Okara. Tutuola, in The Palm-Wine Drinkard, retains the flavor of tradition as much as possible, while Okara's The Voice is a piece of experimental prose which draws its disturbing aura from many sources. Both

journeys are also in tune with universal themes depicted by other novelists.

One feature which links the other novels selected for high school study is the centrality of a figure who is in the throes of preparing for the responsibilities of adult living. Each novel is developed in a different manner and with a different purpose. Ngugi wa Thiong'o's portrayal of a boy's struggle to become educated while his family becomes further embroiled in the land struggle during the years of the Mau Mau in Weep Not, Child is a stark presentation of the crushing of the innocent and ordinary citizen.

Kayira's Jingala centres on the struggle between the traditional and the modern, between father and son, and between the value of education and the value of traditional status. However, the lighter treatment of issues and humorous character portrayal offer an engaging introduction to African writing.

Satire and comedy are major techniques in the final two novels selected for possible use in high schools. Ike's Toads For Supper and Nwankwo's Danda depict young men, one a university student and the other an entertaining loafer, trying to find an appropriate place for themselves in a changing society. The ten novels selected all blend subject matter and literary technique with some effectiveness. They are also representative of the trends and themes found in African novels written in English.

Two novels that have not been selected, but which have definite literary merit, are Ngugi's A Grain of Wheat and Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born. The complex plot structure and interwoven aspects of the characters' lives make A Grain of Wheat too difficult

for the high school reader unfamiliar with African literature and the tribal way of life. The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born is also recognized as being both powerful in its thematic intent and in the controlled use of language to emphasize the theme. However, the constant references to excrement and bodily functions (a deliberately sustained image) make the novel unacceptable for general class study at the high school level.

The choice, then, of African novels written in English to receive analytical attention in Chapter Four is as follows: Achebe's Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease, Arrow of God, A Man of the People, Ngugi's Weep Not, Child, Tutuola's The Palm-Wine Drinkard, Okara's The Voice, Nwankwo's Danda, Ike's Toads For Supper and Kayira's Jingala.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED NOVELS

> Through books, the reader may explore his own nature, become aware of potentialities for thought and feeling within himself, acquire clearer perspectives, develop aims and a sense of direction. He may explore the outer world, other personalities, other ways of life. Liberated from the insularity of time and space, he may range through the wide gamut of social and temperamental alternatives that men have created or imagined. (Rosenblatt, 1968, x-xi)

The numerous explorations possible through literature have been enumerated by Rosenblatt. Readers, whatever their purpose in picking up a book, have ample opportunity to find something which satisfies or challenges them. Within the African novels written in English selected for high school study these avenues of exploration await both teacher and student.

Killam (1973-74) focuses this exploration for the teacher by discussing the function of the writer and teacher in facilitating student growth towards new or deeper understandings to be gained from their study of literature.

> Literature can make a contribution to the human factor in social development and this involves two notions of the function of the writer and teacher, a relationship which is mutually supporting. The first is the educative role in which each is involved. The second role is perhaps the more important. The writer (and ideally and by implication the teacher through his discussion of the writer's work) is especially equipped to know in a sensitive way what is prominent in the minds, what are the most pressing concerns of the people of and for whom he writes. He takes as his responsibility the synthesizing

> of these values and interprets them both to students and to a general readership. (686)

Discussion of each of the selected novels focuses on textual, technical and critical information. Textual analysis shows the theme's development through the novel, reinforces its portrayal of African issues and elaborates on the trend which the novel exemplifies. Evidence which highlights the blending of design and execution with subject matter is also presented. Teachers, thus, have the opportunity to consider the needs of their students together with some of the possible insights to be gained from the study of an African novel written in English. Such comparisons permit teachers to ascertain each novel's potential for use with their students.

Chinua Achebe: Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God, No Longer at Ease, and A Man of the People

Chinua Achebe's four novels Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease, Arrow of God and A Man of the People reveal conscientious attempts to portray Nigeria how it was, how it changed and where it is heading. Although the legacy of colonial rule is a central core of each novel, it is the plight of the individual in a world characterized by uncertainty, pain and violence that grips the reader as the individuals respond to the circumstances in which they find themselves. While the reader contemplates Achebe's characters who are grappling with changes within and without, Achebe's (1964) view of values should be kept in mind.

> I believe that the writer should be concerned with the question of human values. One of the most distressing ills which afflict new nations is a confusion of

> values. We sometimes make the mistake of talking about values as though they were fixed and eternal. . . . Of course values are relative and in a constant state of flux. (10)

Achebe's consistency of vision allows for the development of parallel concerns within his novels. Considered as a whole the novels give an artist's interpretation of the history of his people. They show the movement from late last century (Things Fall Apart) through the 1920s (Arrow of God) and the 1950s (No Longer at Ease) to 1966 (A Man of the People). Further movement is seen from country to town, but the country and traditional society continue to dominate events and individuals.

Walsh (1970), in commenting on the achievements of Achebe, identified a characteristic pattern among Achebe's novels. Each novel has a vivid central figure, a setting that is clearly defined and densely occupied, a background from which the confused mutter of social and historic complexities are heard, and a narrative method that is plain and direct while reflecting the commonplace (55). Presumably this four-fold pattern allows African people to see clearly the strength of their past and the confusions that have followed encounters with the colonizers in a simple, yet engaging way. Roscoe (1971) supports Walsh's view of Achebe's framework when he says that Achebe's audience must be taught by lessons that have a strong central line and little sidetracking; a narrative with one central figure and few disgressions; a species of language that is clear and familiar, which stirs the emotions and drops anchor in the memory (123). This literary framework provides a useful means through which to present each novel, to identify if the pattern exists throughout Achebe's

works, and to consider its effectiveness for the purpose he has for his novels.

Things Fall Apart centres on Okonkwo, a sullen, ambitious and physically overpowering leader who has a fatal flaw — fear.

> But his whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness. . . Okonkwo's fear was greater than these. It was the fear of himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father. (12-13)

This fear dominates all his actions. It explains the restlessness, overabundance of nervous energy, vile temper, fierce emotionalism and a predisposition to violence.

> Okonkwo never showed any emotion openly, unless it be the emotion of anger. To show affection was a sign of weakness, the only thing worth demonstrating was strength. . . .
>
> When he walked, his heels hardly touched the ground and he seemed to walk on springs, as if he was going to pounce on somebody, and he did pounce on people quite often. He had a slight stammer and whenever he was angry and could not get his words out quickly enough, he would use his fists. He had no patience with unsuccessful men. (3-4)

Okonkwo rules his household with a heavy hand, bullying his wives, intimidating his sons, and ill-treating Ikemefuna, the young boy from a neighboring tribe who lived with Okonkwo's family. Since anger is the only emotion he will show, Okonkwo becomes a cold dehumanized person, always itching for activity and work as an outlet for his restless energy. This predisposition to violence causes him to beat his wife during the Week of Peace, deliberately share in the killing of Ikemefuna, and accidentally kill Ezeudu's son. This final act reduces Okonkwo from an exalted leader to a nonentity who is

banished.

Okonkwo's rigidity is partially a product of the society in which he lives. This society respects age, but reveres achievement. Hence Okonkwo's desire to produce the largest crop of yams, be the best wrestler, have a large number of wives and acquire as many titles as possible is understandable. Another influence on Okonkwo's life is his father, Unoka, who was nothing, had nothing and wanted nothing. This caused Okonkwo shame, so he would have no part of idleness and worked relentlessly to amass respect. He did not see what was going on around him if it differed from the stance he supported.

Okonkwo's grandson, Obi Okonkwo, is portrayed in No Longer at Ease. Obi is an appealing, if limited, modern creation, a blend of self-confidence and self-ignorance, of sophistication in taste and moral simplicity. Initially, he has the highest principles and states these bluntly whenever the opportunity arises.

> "The Civil Service is corrupt because of these so-called experienced men at the top," said Obi.
> "You don't believe in experience? You think that a chap straight from the university should be made a permanent secretary?"
> "I didn't say *straight* from the university, but even that would be better than filling our top posts with old men who have no intellectual foundations to support their experience." (20)

He is genuinely against bribery, corruption, incompetence, and nepotism.

> To most of them bribery is no problem. They come straight to the top without bribing anyone. It's not that they're necessarily better than others, it's simply that they can afford to be virtuous. But even that kind of virtue can become a habit. (21)

Obi learns quickly that his ideas are much too theoretical. He must cope with what he has, where he is. He is caught up in a situation which demands that an individual create order out of the flux of values in the world in which he lives. This demands exceptionally moral and intellectual initiative. Obi has the intellectual insight, but he is lacking in moral strength.

His weakness of character is reflected in his inept handling of his human relationships and of his material problems; he is an individual with no sense of order. Perhaps this is too strong an indictment, but Obi gives the impression of never being really prepared to engage in any sort of sustained effort, with the result that he flounders through all he does. This is most easily viewed in the disagreement with his family over Clara, an osu, as his choice for a wife. This incident should cause him to take a firm stand against the old order which condemned any relationship with the family designated to serve the gods, but Obi offers nothing. He becomes resentful, angry, and for a minute even glimpses his own indecisiveness. "His mind was troubled not only by what had happened, but by the discovery that there was nothing in him with which to challenge it honestly" (137).

Obi knows he is right, but he is unable to stand up for it. He is ripe then for the groping fingers of corruption to grasp him. Achebe makes it clear Obi is a man torn between two sets of values — those gained through his Western education and those of his home, Umuofia.

A direct contrast is presented in Arrow of God. Ezeulu, the chief priest of Ulu, is an impressive and noble man who has the

capacity of understanding. He lives after the time of Okonkwo and before Obi, when the colonizers are pressing indirect rule. Ezeulu, in his position of authority, grapples with the traditional and modern influences. He sends his son, Odouche, to school.

> I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eyes there. If there is nothing in it you will come back. But, if there is something there you will bring home my share. The world is like a mask dancing. If you want to see it well you do not stand in one place. My spirit tells me that those who do not befriend the white man today will be saying *had we known* tomorrow. (55)

Ezeulu is a homey man. He is seen seated among his family, friends and clan, a part of all that is traditional, yet above it because of his priestly vocation. During one minute he is shouting to two quarrelling wives to be quiet as they prepare bitterleaf tea; the next minute he is engaged in an impressively solemn rite in honour of the god, Ulu. On another occasion he is cruel because he halts the yam harvest for two months bringing famine to his village, Umuaro, and his own family. Yet, his authority is unchallenged in the village.

Ezeulu thinks about why things happen. He is a priest and his office requires a clear understanding of events, so he goes to the roots of situations and appears ready to accept change intellectually. He sees the value of change. When the colonial government decides in favour of Okperi's land claim against Umuaro, Ezeulu sides with the government against his village because he thinks this is right. In another situation he willingly stays in jail while waiting to see Winterbottom although his village feels this is demeaning for their

high priest. But Ezeulu wants to see what is going on and attempts to understand it. Thus, he is ready to come to terms with change, to a point. Loss of dignity Ezeulu cannot accept; he is very proud. When his son, Obiki, dies, Ezeulu cannot cope and breaks down. The people of the area see this as an unmistakable portent: Ulu, their god, has turned against his chosen priest. The villagers abandon Ezeulu and Ulu and offer yams to the Christian church. Ezeulu is distraught.

> At any other time Ezeulu would have been more than equal to any grief not compounded with humiliation. What, he asked himself again and again, why had Ulu chosen to deal thus with him, to strike him down and cover him with mud? (286-7)

Perhaps this act was merciful, for it allowed Ezeulu to live his last days in isolated splendor as a demented priest unaware of the final outcome — that no man, however great, is greater than his people. Ezeulu's god, Ulu, is defeated, too, for the villagers of Umuaro continue to follow Christianity after the year of the unnecessary famine.

In Achebe's latest novel A Man of the People he moves to the time of independence when Nigerians are learning what it means to rule their own country. Two characters, Chief Nanga, the Minister of Culture, and Odili, a young school teacher, are pitted against each other, but it is Odili who stands out as the central character. Events are seen through his eyes as the narrator. Odili condemns corrupt society while becoming involved in what he rejects. Odili begins, as did Obi, having a theoretical view of public morality derived from his European type of education and he is thoroughly

disillusioned with the political affairs of his own country. He condemns corruption and remains aloof. Odili's position is clearly seen during the minister's visit to Anata Grammar School where Odili teaches.

> As I stood in one corner of that vast tumult waiting for the arrival of the Minister I felt intense bitterness welling up in my mouth. Here were silly, ignorant villagers dancing themselves lame and waiting to blow off their gun powder in honour of one of those who had started the country off down the slopes of inflation. I wished for a miracle, for a voice of thunder, to hush this ridiculous festival and tell the poor contemptible people one or two truths. But of course it would be quite useless. They were not only ignorant but cynical. Tell them that this man has used his position to enrich himself and they would ask you — as my father did — if you thought that a sensible man would spit out the juicy morsel that good fortune placed in his mouth. (2)

Odili further shows himself to be unemotional, highly-principled, and alienated.

> For a person like me who simply couldn't stoop to lick any Big Man's boots it created a big problem. In fact one reason why I took this teaching job in a bush, private school instead of a smart civil service job in the city with car, free housing, etc. was to give myself a certain amount of autonomy. (17)

He also reveals his ego-centricity and selfishness in his relations with his girl friend, Elsie. She is his proudest trophy, the biggest boost to his self-esteem and he does not hesitate to regale all with his involvements with her. There is no understanding about any private nature to their relationship.

Despite Odili's criticisms of politics and politicians he accepts Nanga's invitation to spend a few days in the minister's

household.

> Sitting at Chief Nanga's feet I received enlightenment; many things begin to crystalize out of the mist — some of the emergent forms were not nearly as ugly as I had suspected but many seemed much worse. (39)

Odili has begun to fall under the influence of Nanga's charisma and his clear-cut views become blurred. He tries to explain to himself the temptations of the men in power.

> A man who has just come in from the rain and dried his body and put on dry clothes is more reluctant to go out again than another who has been indoors all the time. The trouble with our new nation — as I saw it then lying on that bed — was that none of us had been indoors long enough to be able to say 'To hell with it'. We had all been in the rain together until yesterday. Then a handful of us — the smart and the lucky and hardly ever the best — had scrambled for the one shelter our former rulers left, and had taken it over and barricaded themselves in. (37)

Odili's growing sympathy for Nanga and uncertainty about his own loyalties end abruptly when he takes Elsie to stay at Nanga's house only to have Nanga move in and usurp Odili's position with her. This blow to Odili's pride forces him to become detached and causes him later to act in revenge by taking Nanga's 'parlour-wife', Edna, and to contest Nanga's seat in government, acts that involve him in what he says he deplores.

He gets fired by his headmaster, abused by Mrs. Nanga and intimidated by Nanga's supporters. He has trouble keeping his image untarnished. After he is beaten and hospitalized, Odili ends his attempt to enforce his ideals in society.

Characters as vivid as Okonkwo, Obi, Ezeulu and Odili must be

presented in settings and with backgrounds that reveal some of the causes of their behaviors since all people are influenced by their surroundings and the background of the times in which they live. Okonkwo and Ezeulu live in the rural areas of Umuofia and Umuaro following a traditional way of life. In Okonkwo's area the clan hierarchy and rules are all important. Stability is considered paramount and people who try to achieve respect through goods and physical stature like Okonkwo are lauded.

During the seven years Okonkwo is banished the missionaries come and begin to exert an influence. This potent outside force causes turmoil within Umuofian society. When the missionaries live in the Evil Forest, a place that is taboo to the villagers, and are not destroyed by the village spirits, the villagers realize some type of compromise may have to be sought for peaceful co-existence. They become watchful and cautious in their dealings with these outsiders. Okonkwo only knows that his son, Nwoye, has joined this outside group, but he is not prepared for the change in attitude his clan has developed. Thus, he is the only rigid individual solidly in support of strict traditional life when he returns. Obierika's anguish over the limits to which his friend, Okonkwo, has been pushed is very clearly understood after Okonkwo commits suicide.

> Obierika, who had been gazing steadily at his friend's dangling body, turned suddenly to the District Commissioner and said ferociously, "that man was one of the greatest men in Umuofia. You drove him to kill himself, and now he will be buried like a dog. . ." He could not say more. His voice trembled and choked his words. (187)

Obierika further indicates that Umuofian society has suffered as

much as Okonkwo.

> The whiteman is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart. (160)

Ezeulu, too, is a product of traditional society, but traditional with a difference. For Ezeulu the white colonizers have always been there, just over the hill exerting indirect influence from a neighboring district. Umuaro, where Ezeulu rules as high priest, is a coalition of six villages who work and otherwise interact together. Since the colonial administration arrived it allowed the Umuaro's society to function as it always had, intruding only in small ways such as offering items for sale that were not available previously. During the time of Arrow of God the administration became concerned with finding a man to be Paramount Chief of several districts. Winterbottom, the District Officer, wants to consider Ezeulu whom he remembers from the land issue, but both Ezeulu and Winterbottom misunderstand and misinterpret each other's actions. Winterbottom sees Ezeulu as an impressive-looking fetish priest who performs rites of darkness and not as a man of intelligence and understanding. Ezeulu, on the other hand, is willing to interact with the foreigners and consider their offerings if it is to his advantage, while still powerfully manipulating his own people at will. Ezeulu's attempts at compromise, sending Oduche to school and agreeing with the government's settlement of land in Okperi's favour, backfire for Oduche aligns himself with the mission and tries to kill his father's sacred python while

the people of Umuaro do not understand Ezeulu's support of the enemy. This misinterpretation of events and authority figures causes friction between the two factions and Ezeulu is caught in the middle. Thus, when his son, Obika, dies while performing a ritual dance Ezeulu collapses and the village turns to the colonizers.

A transition from the rural to the urban setting occurs in No Longer at Ease and A Man of the People. Both are set primarily in Lagos and centre on people involved in government circles and those associated with them. No Longer at Ease is set before independence but after the colonizers have been in Nigeria for a considerable time. A Man of the People deals with the situation of Nigerians ruling themselves after independence.

In the former setting, Obi has to function in an unsettled and uneasy atmosphere where money has brought together people desiring selfish materialistic gain and high stature rather than a better life for the people or country as a whole. This is contrasted with the traditional society that still has its roots, though weakening, in the villages. Since Obi has a "European post" with a good salary, fine clothes, an apartment, and a car, demands for money are made on him by his aging father, dying mother, a brother who wants to go to high school, and the Umuofia Progressive Union. Certainly his riches will not cover all these demands and allow him to live as well as he is expected to. Most people in Lagos in these positions cope through accepting bribes, a practice Obi initially is against.

Contemporary and traditional views come into conflict over Obi's relationship with Clara, his girl friend. Even some of his educated friends, like Christopher and Joseph, are appalled at his association

with an osu, a person who was an outcast in traditional society, as is the Umuofia Progressive Union and his family. Thus Obi's predicament has developed as a result of external influences — residual values of the past and a naivety about the value and power of money. So Obi succumbs to corruption because of his confused state in an inconsistent system — one which has not succeeded in keeping its connections with the past straight and its route forward open.

After the era of the colonizers, Nigerians take over managing their own affairs. Achebe points out in A Man of the People just how far the corruption and bribery only glimpsed in No Longer at Ease has gone. He now portrays a situation where power is all important no matter how it is attained and maintained. The story of Chiefs Nanga and Koko, as seen through the eyes of the initially uninvolved Odili, is one of political intrigue, large scale bribery, public apostasy and of self-interest masquerading as integrity (Ravenscroft, 1973, 187). Odili comments after his own involvement, "you died a good death if your life had inspired someone to come foward and shoot your murderer in the chest — without asking to be paid" (167). This is quite a contrast to the peaceful coexistence in the traditional life of the early part of Things Fall Apart. Through Odili's examination of and involvement in various questionable situations A Man of the People portrays the predicament modern Nigeria faces. Odili struggles, as far as he is able, to act up to the ideals he proposes, but despite his intentions he is betrayed time and time again into self-deception and hypocrisy. The double standard under which he operates is obvious when he judges his own actions and those of others.

Achebe's characters, settings and backgrounds are well established, yet these are inadequate to convey his message unless the language used is one that his people can both identify and understand. In his first three novels Achebe uses an omniscient narrator to present his message. In No Longer at Ease at Obi's return Achebe narrates:

> He spoke about the wonderful welcome they had given him on his return. If a man returns from a long journey and no one says 'nno' to him he feels like one who has not arrived. He tried to improvise a joke about beer and palm-wine but it did not come off, and he hurried to the next point. He thanked them for the sacrifices they had made to send him to England. He would try his best to justify their confidence. The speech which had started off one hundred per cent in Ibo was now fifty-fifty. But his audience seemed highly impressed. (81)

With such narration the language is kept simple and direct. Frequently proverbs, which are a natural expression of the people's thoughts, are used to clarify actions or behaviors. In Things Fall Apart Achebe uses proverbs as vivid analogies. "An old woman is always uneasy when dry bones are mentioned in a proverb" (19) emphasizes Okonkwo's discomfort at the mention of anything related to his father, Unoka. The proverb is used because it allows a speaker to make his point tactfully and concisely. This aspect of Achebe's prose gives it a poetic quality.

Proverbs play an equally important part in No Longer at Ease and Arrow of God. When Obi is leaving to study in England he is admonished by his community.

> We are sending you to learn book. Enjoyment can wait. Do not be in a hurry to rush into the pleasures of the world like the young antelope who danced herself lame when the main dance was yet to come. (10)

Later, when Obi is caught and sentenced for bribery, a Umuofia Progressive Union member comments

> The President said it was a thing of shame for a man in the senior service to go to prison for twenty pounds. He repeated twenty pounds, spitting it out. I am against people reaping where they have not sown. But we have a saying that if you want to eat a toad you should look for a fat and juicy one. (6)

In Arrow of God the best use of proverbs is seen when Ezeulu agonizes over his son's death.

> When was it ever heard that a child was scalded by the piece of yam its own mother put into its palm? What man would send his son with a potsherd to bring fire from a neighbourer's hut and then unleash rain? Whoever sent his son up the palm to gather nuts and then took an axe and felled the tree? . . . If the rat cannot flee fast enough let him make way for the tortiose! (229)

With the exception of the proverbs that are interwoven through the prose, Achebe normally uses idiomatic English. He departs from this standard only for Ibo statements that would look odd in standard English. Achebe could not be expected to translate the egwugwu's words 'Uzowulu's body, I salute you' into something like 'Good afternoon, Uzowulu' for this would leave out the traditionally strong relationship between Uzowulu and the ancestral spirit. Similarly, when Ekwefi, one of Okonkwo's wives, replies to a question about Okonkwo's attempt to murder her, says, 'I cannot yet find a mouth with which to tell the story', her sense of horror is transferred more forcefully than with something like, 'I cannot find words to describe it.'

A Man of the People is something of a departure from the omniscient narrator who intervenes, explains and to some extent directs, to a story told through the eyes of Odili. Odili tells the story of the rotten state of society through his own involvement in it, as if half aware of his plight and the plight of society. Odili, also, has to use a wide range of language for he must present what he hears, unlike the reporter narrator of the earlier novels who can take the opportunity to comment. Odili comes into contact with a whole range of speech from literary European English to untranslated Ibo phrase. This range of language use is outlined when Odili tries to get a close picture of the Nanga household.

> A small thing, but it struck me even as early as this: Mr. Nanga always spoke English or pidgin; his children, whom I discovered went to expensive private schools run by European ladies spoke impeccable English, but Mrs. Nanga stuck to our language — with the odd English word thrown in now and again. (32)

Since Odili tells the story from within, he has to be prepared for language shifts. When Chief Nanga speaks to Odili he says

> If you come as soon as you close, you can stay in my guestroom with everything complete — bedroom, parlour, bathroom, latrine, everything — self-contained. You can live by yourself and do *anything* you like there; it's all yours. (18)

but when Chief Nanga speaks to a cook in Odili's presence a shift occurs.

> "Wetin you fit cook?" asked Chief Nanga as he perused the young man's sheaf of testimonials, probably not one of them genuine.
> "I fit cook every European chop like steak and kidney pie, chicken puri, misk grill, cake omelette. . .

"You no sabi cook African chop?"
"Ahn that one I no sabi am-o." (46)

Thus, Odili's descriptions and recording of events gives quite a different picture of contemporary Nigerian society than did Achebe's earlier representations.

Achebe sets out to instruct. He has shown the values and beauty of traditional life. Achebe has also exposed and attacked injustice. He has shown how the changes affected individuals and societies; he has shown how the current predicament in Nigeria stems from his own people committing the same mistakes and desiring the same goods and status as the colonizers.

In all four novels, however, Achebe gives no answers. He presents situations where characters become embroiled in the turmoil that is raging around them. His characters either have a rigid or a fluid set of values, neither capable of harnessing the confused environment in which the characters must function. Achebe refrains from solving the dilemmas, implying that these two forces — the old and the new — will continue to exert a pull on his people and they will need all their individual resources to come through with a balanced order of traditional and contemporary in which all can function peacefully.

Achebe (1972) in commenting on his country and his work, is realistic.

> Unfortunately when two cultures meet, some of the worst elements of the old are retained and some of the worst of the new are added on to them. So if it were for me to order society I would be very unhappy about the way things have turned out. But again, I see this as the way life is. Every society has to grow up, every society has to learn its own lesson, so

> I don't despair. A Man of the People is a rather serious indictment — if you like — of post independence Africa. But I don't give up because I think it is a necessary stage in our growth. (13)

Abiola Irele (1967) reveals succinctly the relevance and effectiveness of Achebe's writing.

> . . . a novelist deals not only with situations but also, and above all, with individuals. And it is precisely the cycle created by the responses of men to the pressure of events, their evolutions at significant levels of feeling and thought, that makes the real world of the novel. The importance of Chinua Achebe's novels derive not simply from his theme, but from his complete presentation of men in action in living reaction to their fate, as well as from his own perception that underlies his imaginative world and confers upon it relevance and truth. (167)

Achebe's novels offer a vision of life, which is essentially tragic, compounded by success and failure, embued with an awareness of human suffering and with the human capacity to endure. Achebe has fulfilled his purpose to instruct, to portray a credible world, and through it all the spirit of man and the belief in the strength of his people endures.

Amos Tutuola: The Palm-Wine Drinkard and Gabriel Okara: The Voice

Although Chinua Achebe, Amos Tutuola and Gabriel Okara are of the same generation and share recognition as early African novelists writing in English who have made a significant contribution to the literary world, their novels reveal different purposes, designs and manners of execution. Achebe has presented, through a sociological base, his belief in the importance of tradition and tribal norms.

Tutuola, for the most part, puts social and political issues aside to delve into the world of superstition, the supernatural and its relationship and relevance to the everyday world of man. Okara focuses on the inner man and his search to find meaning in life while harassed by members of society who do not want the status quo to alter.

Tutuola and Okara use the quest superstructure for their novels, The Palm-Wine Drinkard and The Voice. This foundation together with identification of similarities and differences in the authors' design and execution of the quests undertaken by the Drinkard and Okolo furnish the basis for comparative analysis.

Taiwo (1976), Awooner (1975), Moore (1967), Laurence (1968), Roscoe (1971) and Palmer (1972) indicate The Palm-Wine Drinkard and The Voice reveal many of the components of the quest motif found in the literature of most countries. The novels take the well-known form of departure, initiation and return. Taiwo (1976) describes the hero as being

> highly motivated by the object of his search and conviction of enormous advantages which will be derived from a mission successfully accomplished. This is what gives meaning and purpose to his journey and for this he is usually willing to take risks and forgo every kind of convenience. (88)

Plot structure within the novels begin with the presentation of the heroes in settings and situations which cause them to depart. The journeys are interspersed with difficult tasks or involvements which make the goals of the heroes almost impossible to attain. However, the heroes persevere because of desire to attain their goals. Personal enlightenment and growth gained throughout the

journeys give the heroes confidence to return and take a different approach to the situations left.

In The Palm-Wine Drinkard, the Drinkard is an indolent hero who has an indulgent father. The Drinkard takes no responsibility for fulfilling the needs of his family or community; his sole interest is drinking palm-wine. His concentration on the pleasures of life are reminiscent of Unoka in Things Fall Apart. The Drinkard's palm-wine tapper falls out of a tree one day and is killed. This misfortune affects the community by disrupting the Drinkard's pattern of interpersonal relationships (he no longer has palm-wine to share).

Because of alienation from the community and his sense of personal loss the Drinkard sets out to find his Tapster who has gone to Deads Town. The search takes the Drinkard from the world of the living to the world of the dead and results in his encountering numerous dangers. Moore (1967) suggests these encounters allow for the presentation of the familiar figures of heroic myth: the taskmasters who impose certain labours in return for information, the helpful female companion and the devouring monsters (179).

The Drinkard immediately encounters a taskmaster who wants Death captured in return for information about the whereabouts of Deads Town. Next the Drinkard searches for a man's daughter who has become entranced by Skull and follows him. As a reward the Drinkard is given the woman for his wife. Throughout the journey numerous dangerous situations, including the eradication of the Red Fish, develop and are solved through hard work, the use of juju (magical power) or the intervention of the supernatural. The abnormal birth of their child via the wife's thumb and the child's monsterous

characteristics cause the couple hardship. The child is very demanding; he eats all the food within reach, alienates the village people and causes the family's ejection from their home and land. Two periods of respite are provided at Wraith Island and with Faithful-Mother in the White Tree.

Eventually the Drinkard and his wife find the Tapster in Deads Town only to realize that he cannot return with them to the land of the living. However, the Tapster gives the Drinkard a magic egg which, if used wisely, will supply whatever the couple desires. The return trip is much shorter though still fraught with difficulties. Harmony is restored in community relations when the Drinkard feeds the starving populous whose situation has been caused by a famine. Through the loosely-linked events in The Palm-Wine Drinkard, many myths, legends and folktales are embedded. These provide the basis for the learning and growth experienced by the Drinkard and his wife.

While the Drinkard initiated his journey on a whim, Okolo in The Voice has an inner rationale for his search. Also unlike the Drinkard, Okolo belongs to the modern world and is subject to its tensions and conflicts. Okolo is a young educated man who returns to his village, Amatu, to discover that the drive for material gain and moral decadence are the all-consuming passions of Chief Izongo, his Elders and most of the village people. Okolo is appalled and wonders where honesty and integrity have gone. He believes a spiritual base and purpose for life are necessary in everyone's life and begins to search for these values. The search is identified as *it* and provides the basis for the inner and outer conflicts that are revealed. Asking questions about the meaning of life puts Okolo in

a threatening position. Thus, the problem in the novel can be defined as the problem of a man unable to fit into an expected social framework where the individual is required to lose his identity in the interests of social cohesion.

Chief Izongo, motivated by fear, banished Okolo.

> It was a great task I performed, my people. A great task in sending him away. A dangerous task, but it had to be done for the good of us all. We did it with our eyes on our occiputs, for it is a strong thing be to send away one who is looking for *it*. Only a madman looks for *it* in this turned world. Let him look for *it* in this wide world if he can find it. But we don't want him to stay here asking, "Have you *it*? Have you *it*? Have you *it*?" Even in our sleep we hear him asking. We know not what *it* is. We do not want to know. Let us be as we are. We do not want to be troubled by one whose inside is filled with water. (48-49)

Izongo's fear and hypocrisy are further evidenced when he bribes the villagers with palm-wine so they will turn in Okolo should he dare to return.

Okolo, meanwhile, takes a canoe across the river to Sologa, a nearby town. During the crossing it rains and Okolo protects from the elements Ebiere, a young woman who is seated beside him. Ebiere's mother-in-law and other passengers on the boat accuse Okolo of an ulterior motive in covering the girl and take him to court for violating Ebiere. Okolo realizes that what he thought was lacking only in Amatu is absent elsewhere as well. In Sologa, Okolo is humiliated, persecuted, and overwhelmed by his surroundings. Even his encounter with the white police officer is disillusioning for the officer is more concerned with political expediency than with honesty and integrity.

> "Look, my son, life isn't that way," the whiteman stated with a quiet teaching voice. "Life's like playing checkers. If you make the wrong move you are finished. There are some to whom you can tell the truth, however unpleasant, about them to their faces and you get away with it. But the same won't be true of others. They may make things very, very unpleasant for you. See?"
>
> "You don't believe in truth and honesty, then?"
>
> "Look, my lad, these things simply don't exist in real life, if you want to get anywhere, if you want to make good. But mind you, I am not saying I do not believe in them. All I am saying is, you have to be judicious. . . ." (62)

Okolo decides *it* does not exist in the present world, so he will return to Amatu and encourage its creation in the minds of the people. The return canoe trip serves as a microcosm of society where Okolo is isolated because he is aware of how different he is and the other passengers reflect the lethargy and complacency of general society. On his return to Amatu he walks into an orgy sponsored by Chief Izongo, eludes custody through the intervention of Tuere, a supposed witch, and learns that changes are beginning in Amatu. Ukule, the cripple, informs Okolo who is tied to Tuere and pushed into the river, in a canoe which is drawn into a whirlpool and disappears, "Your spoken words will not die" (96).

The quest form lends itself to episodic treatment for the author is free to introduce any number of encounters with taskmasters or devouring monsters as long as each provides a learning experience for the searching hero. Tutuola has been criticized for using too many episodes in The Palm-Wine Drinkard, yet each provides insight into the traditional working of the mind in its confrontation with super-

stitions and supernatural beliefs. Laurence (1968) summarizes the importance of Tutuola's numerous and diverse episodes.

> Tutuola writes best when most intuitively and most intensely inward. His forests are certainly and in detail the outer ones but they are, as well, the forests of the mind, where the individual meets and grapples with the creatures of his own imagination. These creatures are aspects of himself, aspects of his response to the world into which he was born, the world to which he must continue to return if he is to live as a man. (147)

Okara, too, puts Okolo into several different situations so that he might affirm his inner belief and gain understanding of what he sees around him. Okolo's first observation of the streets of Sologa, his experience in the eating house and the final orgy at Amatu each offer the opportunity for greater growth.

Tutuola and Okara use techniques from the oral tradition to enhance the development of the quest. One is the use of dilemma to involve the reader in what is transpiring. Okolo's dilemma is built on the boat after he is confronted by the mother-in-law and the reader is forced to wonder if Okolo's innocence will be believed. In the case of the Drinkard, dilemma is brought to the reader by direct comment as in the situation where the Drinkard is asked in Mixed Town to judge two cases.

> So I shall be very much grateful if anyone who reads this story-book can judge one or both cases and send the judgement to me as early as possible, because the whole people in the "mixed town" want me very urgently to come and judge the two cases. (115)

A second technique from the oral tradition is the use of characters which are representational rather than real. Palmer (1972),

Larson (1972), and Armstrong (1971) discuss the characters as one dimensional for the most part, playing a symbolic role by representing forces and ideas larger than themselves and having vague names so as to emphasize their allegorical qualities. In The Voice Okolo means 'the voice' and he appears to be a Christ-like figure devoid of a past, specific habits or defined appearance. The portrayal of Okolo crying out against the spiritual sterility, inhumanity and materialism offers a prophet-like impression.

> If you put a black paint over a white paint, does it mean there is no white paint? Under the black paint the white paint is still there and it will show when the black paint is rubbed off. That's the thing I am doing — trying to rub off the black paint. Our father's insides always contained things straight. They did straight things. Our insides were also clean and we did the straight things until the new time came. We can still sweep the dirt out of our houses every morning. (29-30)

Other characters in The Voice named with larger meaning in mind are Izongo who is called the leopard and various Elders who are named lightning, he-who-keeps-my-head-under-water, fire, pepper and ant (71-72). Characters within The Palm-Wine Drinkard reflect the same utilitarian features. The reader encounters Death, Skull, Drum, Dance, Song, Greedy Bush, Hungry Creature, Red People, Faithful-Mother, and Spirit of Prey.

A final technique of the oral tradition to be highlighted is the use of description that is functional in that it helps build tension. The mother-in-law scene in the canoe, the encounter with the police officer, the mob scenes with Chief Izongo all raise the level of tension in The Voice. Descriptions of the Red Fish, the environment within White Tree and Red Town, and the attempted escape

of the lady from the Skulls reveal in The Palm-Wine Drinkard another means of obtaining reader involvement.

> But one day, the lady attempted to escape from the hole, and at the same time that the Skull who was watching her whistled to the rest of the Skulls that were in the backyard, the whole of them rushed out to the place where the lady sat on the bull frog, so they caught her, but as all of them were rushing out, they were rolling on the ground as if a thousand petrol drums were pushing along a hard road. (22)

Okara and Tutuola differ in the development of their quests, too. Tutuola makes extensive use of the first person narrator and folktale while Okara emphasizes symbolism and other imagery from his poetic background. Since Tutuola is primarily a storyteller (Larsen, 1972), it is not surprising that he uses the first person point of view in The Palm-Wine Drinkard. This provides a means of direct communication with listener or reader and allows warmth to be transferred.

> I was a palm-wine drinkard since I was a boy of ten years of age. I had no other work more than to drink palm-wine in my life. In those days we did not know other money, except COWRIES, so that everything was cheap, and my father was the richest man in our town. (7)

Taiwo (1976), Dathorne (1971), Laurence (1968), Lindfors (1973), and Moore (1967) comment on Tutuola's extensive use of folktales in his work. Dathorne (1971) indicates that Tutuola was "the first to see possibilities of imaginative translation of mythology into English" (64). Lindfors (1973) furthers Dathorne's view by stating

> The journey to the land of the dead, the abnormal conception, the monstrous child, the enormous drinking capacity, the all-providing magical object, the tree spirits, the personifications, the fabulous monsters —

> these are standard materials of oral tradition, the stuff folktales are made of all over the world. (53)

The special feature of Tutuola's folktales, however, is the way he amends them to suit his artistic purpose, to make his point more clearly. His 'half-bodied baby speaks with a lower voice like a telephone' (35), his Drinkard becomes 'a big bird like an aeroplane' (40), and his woman who approaches the Drinkard and his wife after leaving Faithful-Mother has on 'high-heel shoes which resemble aluminum in color' (73). Each incorporate features of Western civilization. The result of such blending is an unusual combination of spirit world and real world, of traditional belief and modern experience.

Okara's poetic background offers him the same opportunity for individual treatment of material that Tutuola's involvement with the oral tradition of the folktale does for him. Okara's frequent use of *it* and "inside" emphasize the importance of such repetitions to the working out of the theme of the novel. "Inside" occurs in many contexts, as is portrayed in the following examples.

> His [Okolo's] inside then smellest bad for the town's people (14).
>
> Okolo . . . talked to his inside (47).
>
> I [Okolo's father] have a sweet inside and clean as the eye of the sky (77).

The meaning of *it* gradually unfolds, too, through the variety of situations in which it is used. The reader learns what *it* is not. "You have your M.A., Ph. D., but you have not got *it*" (24). Activities and utterances of Okolo's associates offer further insight into *its* meaning. Tuere comments to Okolo, "How do you expect to find *it*

when everybody has locked up his inside?" (16)

Okara's poetic background has influenced his use of multi-level symbols and images.

> Through the black black night Okolo walked, stumbled, walked. His inside was a room with chairs, cushions, papers scattered all over the floor by thieves. Okolo walked, stumbled, walked. His eyes shut and opened, shut and opened, expecting to see a light in each opening, but none he saw in the black black night.
>
> At last the black black night like the back of a cooking pot entered his inside and grabbed his thoughts, threw them out into the blacker than black night. And Okolo walked, stumbled, walked with an inside empty of thoughts except the black black night. (3132)

In this passage Okolo's agony is revealed. His "inside" becomes a living room invaded by thieves; his helplessness is emphasized by the use of repetitions "walked, stumbled, walked"; his confusion is symbolized by the untidy state of the room and his disappointment in his inability to replace the darkness with light. The repetition of "black" emphasizes Okolo's growing disillusionment and desolation.

The blending of literary technique and language use portrayed throughout the novels of Tutuola and Okara, reveals the interwoven designs developed by these two novelists. Further observations reveal the measures taken by each of Okara and Tutuola to provide a balanced presentation which reflects their indigenous language and English. Okara uses the Ijaw features of repetition for emphasis and the inverted command in the dialogue among the messengers coming to Okolo's place.

> Third Messenger: "Your nonsense words stop. These things have meaning no more. . . ."
> First Messenger: "Me know nothing? Me know nothing? Because I went not to school I have

> no bile, I have no head? Me know nothing? Then answer me this. Your hair was black black be, then it became white like white cloth and now it is black black be more than blackness." (8-9)

Poetic rhythms, the Ijaw sentence pattern: subject, object, verb, and a poet's precise description are glimpsed as Okolo awaits the messengers.

> It was the day's ending and Okolo by a window stood. Okolo stood looking at the sun behind a tree tops falling. The river was flowing, reflecting the finishing sun, like a dying away memory. It was like an idol's face, no one knowing what is behind. Okolo at the palm trees looked. They were like women with hair hanging down, dancing, possessed. Egrets, like white flower petals strung slackly across the river, swaying up and down, were returning home. And, on the river, canoes were crawling home with bent backs and tired hands, paddling. (9)

Finally, Okara uses standard English if he wants to concisely and with speed move the action forward.

> When day broke the following day it broke on a canoe aimlessly floating down the river. And in the canoe tied together back to back with their feet tied to the seats of the canoe, were Okolo and Tuere. Down they floated from one bank of the river to the other like debris, carried by the current. Then the canoe was drawn into a whirlpool. It spun around and round and was slowly drawn into the core and finally disappeared. And the water rolled over the top and the river flowed smoothly over it as if nothing had happened. (96)

Tutuola's style reveals a more consistent portrayal of indigenous language influence for he is more steeped in the Yoruba tradition than the modern world and his Drinkard is totally a traditional man unlike Okolo. Smith (1959) comments that the reader delights in Tutuola's use of language because it is "constantly invented, constantly unexpected" (30), yet if Yoruba speech patterns and ideas are understood,

Tutuola writes as one would expect. Lindors (1973) emphasizes that Yoruba speakers relish using humorous and bizarre effects as well as fantasy and comic exaggeration. Therefore, Tutuola's tendency to push the reader's sense of credibility beyond reasonable expectation is more understandable.

The Yoruba speaker or writer also reiterates an idea several times enhancing the idea or varying it slightly for effect. Hence, Tutuola's apparently excessive use of episodes which contain many of the same components become necessary. The use of the rhetorical question, "Ah! how could we escape from this half-bodied baby?" (57), the use of description rather than dialogue or enactment and the use of direct statement rather than implication also reflect Tutuola's Yoruba background.

Okara and Tutuola, cognizant of their particular traditional backgrounds, have endeavored to use patterns of language which are appropriate to the characters and situations they have developed. Dathorne (1971) effectively summarizes the use of language appropriate to character.

> Part of Tutuola's success at this imaginative re-ordering of folklore is due to his use of language. Those who argue that he writes 'wrong' English do not take two factors into consideration. One is that they forget that the story is written in first person and is about a palm-wine drinker. Were he to speak standard English this would be ludicrous to anyone acquainted with the realities of West African speech. Secondly, Tutuola's English is a sensible compromise, between raw pidgin (which would not be intelligible to European readers) and standard English. (72)

The local and universal meaning of both novels centres on the need for individuals and societies to be in harmony with their gods.

Within The Voice and The Palm-Wine Drinkard is seen the contemporary and timeless struggle between darkness and light. Both novels present the dramatization of the individual who experiences misfortune so that his community or race may somehow benefit from the experience. The drinkard's loss affected the community, disrupted relationships, yet on his return as a wiser man he is able to bring about a reconciliation between Earth and Heaven which allows his race to live harmoniously.

Conversely, Okolo's ejection from his community allows him to see that "evil" has engulfed the whole society. His determination to teach people to become aware of the "light" asserts the resilience of human integrity in an otherwise disillusioning portrayal of man. These novels challenge the reader to question basic assumptions and relate inner truth to outer reality.

Finally, it should be noted the unique executions of theme presented by Tutuola and Okara have not been duplicated. They are one-of-a-kind novelists, masters without apprentices.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o: Weep Not, Child

West African novelists such as Achebe, Tutuola and Okara were read by many East Africans before any lengthy fiction emerged from writers in East African countries. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a Kenyan respected among African writers, has learned much from these West African novelists whose works appeared in the decade before Ngugi began serious writing. Most of the anthropological detail seen in West African literature is absent in Ngugi's writing for the concerns of the East African centres on the present.

Ngugi is very close to the protest tradition because his consum-

ing interest is in the struggle for freedom in Kenya and its destructive effects on the African way of life. Two issues which emerge with this concern are the question of land ownership and the importance of education. The influence of these issues permeates Ngugi's novels and directs, to some extent, his methods of character development and language use. Weep Not, Child, Ngugi's second novel, exemplifies concerns central to Kenyans and uses literary techniques and language in ways which are different from the novelists in West Africa.

Ngugi (1966) has indicated that in Weep Not, Child he was primarily interested in evoking what a simple village community felt, caught between forces which they could not quite understand. As Awooner (1975) points out land and freedom have been synonymous terms to Kenyans ever since the British colonial policy at the turn of the century encouraged white European settlers to establish farms in the "white highlands", the heart of Gikuyu country. The land ownership issue erupted into violence with the Mau Mau rebellion of the 1950s, the time-frame and setting of Weep Not, Child.

Themes in Weep Not, Child are developed through the framework of a situational novel, the presentation of an experience or situation out of which certain implications become obvious. This situational novel, like Things Fall Apart, portrays a group-felt experience while focusing on one or two characters. Njoroge's family becomes the microcosm through which the shattering of hopes and aspirations of a whole people is mirrored.

Part One establishes a composite overview of Gikuyu society. Introduction to Njoroge and his mother, Nyokabi, opens the novel.

> Nyokabi called him. . . .
> 'Would you like to go to school?'
> 'O, mother!' Njoroge gasped. He half feared that the woman might withdraw her words. There was a little silence till she said,
> 'We are poor. You know that.'
> 'Yes, mother.' His heart pounded against his ribs slightly. His voice was shaky.
> 'So you won't be getting a mid-day meal like other children.'
> 'I understand.'
> 'You won't bring shame to me one day by refusing to attend school?' (3)

The importance of being given the opportunity to attend school is apparent immediately. Kamau, an older brother, accepts the decision as a necessary part of life.

> 'No, brother. You know I am being trained as a carpenter. I cannot drop the apprenticeship. But I am glad you're going to school.'
> 'I am, oh, so glad. But I wish you too would come.'
> 'Don't you worry about me. Everything will be all right. Get education, I'll get carpentry. Then we shall, in the future, be able to have a new and better home for the whole family.' (4)

Dozens of short staccato-like scenes such as these presented reveal the relationships among family members; between Ngotho and his boss, Mr. Howlands, a white farmer; between Njoroge and Mwihaki, Jacobi's daughter; and portray the hub of village life in the barber shop.

The land issue is brought into focus one evening as the family gathers around Ngotho who tells the story of how Mukuyu, their god, had given the land to their ancestors and said

> "This land I hand over to you. O Man and Woman
> It's yours to rule and till in serenity sacrificing
> Only to me, your God, under my sacred tree. . ." (28)

This story revealed that the land on which Mr. Howlands farms is really their land, a surprising relevation to the younger boys.

Boro, one of the older sons, however, is aware he hadn't been able to obtain land on which to settle. This new understanding makes him angry and he questions how his people could let the white man occupy his land without acting.

Conflict is initiated. As time passes Ngotho tries to encourage Njoroge's schooling, while becoming preoccupied with the importance of land.'

> 'Education is everything', Ngotho said. Yet he doubted this because he knew deep inside his heart that land was everything. Education was good only because it would lead to the recovery of the lost lands.
>
> 'You must learn to escape the conditions under which we live. It is a hard way. It is not much that a man can do without a piece of land.' (43-44)

However, a strike looms. Ngotho becomes indecisive about whether he should join the youth who want action now rather than waiting for release through the fulfilment of prophecy. As the tone changes, Part One ends on the brink of violence.

Part Two depicts the violence and frustration which follow the strike. It reveals how members of Njoroge's family are tortured, imprisoned and humiliated because they support the Mau Mau. Njoroge continues his schooling until he is forcefully removed to answer questions about his family. Eventually, realizing all his dreams have been shattered Njoroge contemplates suicide.

Since Ngugi is trying to show the effect of conflict on individuals, he develops some characters to a much greater extent than do the early West African novelists. Ngotho, Njoroge's father, is portrayed as a tragic figure, one who is a traditionalist, who loves

the land and who desires peace for all.

> Ngotho bought four pounds of meat. But they were bound into two bundles each of two pounds. One bundle was for his first wife, Njeri, and the other for Nyokabi, his second wife. A husband had to be wise in these affairs otherwise a small flaw or apparent bias could easily generate a civil war in the family. Not that Ngotho feared this very much. He knew that his two wives liked each other and were good companions and friends. But you could not quite trust women. They were fickle and very jealous. When a woman was angry no amount of beating would pacify her. Ngotho did not beat his wives much. On the contrary, his home was well known for being a place of peace. (12)

After joining the strike, Ngotho becomes a focal point for the abuse of both Mr. Howlands, Ngotho's former boss and the newly appointed District Officer, and Jacobo, a Kenyan who has attained wealth and position by supporting the colonial government. Ngotho is humiliated through the loss of his job, the loss of his house, his son, Boro's disagreement with him over how to repossess the land and the arrest of his wife, Njeri and son, Kori. Some restoration of dignity occurs when he turns himself in as Jacobo's murderer to save his son. As a result of this sacrifice, he is castrated by Mr. Howlands and Boro seeks reconciliation at Ngotho's deathbed.

The change in Mr. Howland's character has been called cheap melodrama (Awooner, 1975). Initially Howlands had as great a love for the land as Ngotho. They shared a common history — both were alienated from Britain, both had lost a son in the war, yet after the strike Howlands becomes a child beater and torturer while upholding the office given him by the colonial powers.

It is in Njoroge, though, that a very sensitive picture is drawn.

Weep Not, Child is told from his point of view, so in the passing of thirteen years Njoroge is involved in many experiences which initiate gradual maturation. Initially, Njoroge is seen a sensitive, introverted child who depends heavily on his family. As he becomes involved in school, education becomes his whole life. He sees himself as a savior, one to lead his people out of their troubles.

> He knew that for him education would be the fulfilment of a wider and more significant vision — a vision that embraced the demand made on him, not only by his father, but also by his mother, his brothers and even the village. He saw himself destined for something big, and this made his heart glow. (44)

Later, Njoroge withdraws into himself and his studies reacting passively to events and trying to avoid any involvement. He even asks Mwihaki, Jacobo's daughter, to leave the country with him.

> 'Yes, we go to Uganda and live —'
> . . . . . .
> 'Don't you see that what you suggest is too easy a way out? We are no longer children,' she said between her sobs.
> 'That's why we must go away. Kenya is no place for us. It is not childish to remain in a hole when you can take yourself out?'
> . . . . . .
> 'Yes. But we have a duty. Our duty to other people is our biggest responsibility as grown men and women.'
> . . . . . .
> The sun was sinking down. Njoroge's last hope had vanished. For the first time he knew that he was in the world all alone without a soul on whom he could lean. (150-1)

Finally, Njoroge makes the decision to commit suicide, but is stopped from carrying out the action by his two mothers. Through Njoroge's growth towards manhood, the unrest and frustration of East Africans has been expressed. But it is in the portrait of the two mothers following their son that hope for a peaceful future is

glimpsed, a future where, through the best from two worlds, troubles ease and a new society will flourish.

Much of what is revealed about characters and events is told the reader through author comment and the use of a collective conscience who draws the reader in with the use of 'you' (Larson, 1972). This technique becomes important because Njoroge, as a small boy, lacks the maturity to explain the motivation for events or to interpret what is evolving around him. Yet, to avoid turning the novel into a political tract Ngugi presents the struggle from Njoroge's point of view using supplementary comments to ensure readers can see what is occurring within, around, and beyond the characters.

Ngugi's language is simple and contains Biblical overtones. The Biblical aura is most appropriate for the description of the sufferings of people in bondage. It is also fitting for Ngotho who sacrifices his life for his sons and for Njoroge who essentially is searching out his place in the confused world around him. Criticism focusing on the extreme simplicity and naivety of Ngugi's language (Palmer, 1972) is lacking substantiation. East Africans were tutored in the use of precise and correct English. With this background Ngugi needed to use sentences lacking complexity as he was portraying a very young boy and a group of villagers who have experienced no formal education.

Ngugi has captured the inner torment of individuals caught in a situation that affects them directly, yet has ramifications beyond their understanding. He has portrayed their disorientation within the family and community structure as a result of the experience.

His achievement as summarized by Roscoe (1977) is

> to have analyzed sharply a people's agony at a particular moment in their history and to have given us a powerfully honest reading of human nature. (190)

Nkem Nwankwo: Danda, Chukwuemeka Ike: Toads For Supper, and Legson Kayira: Jingala

Nkem Nwankwo, Chukwuemeka Ike and Legson Kayira have had the benefit of exposure to the early West African novelists before they began their own writing. Nwankwo and Ike, both Nigerians from the Ibo tribe, have been influenced by Chinua Achebe whose use of Ibo proverb and elements of the traditional life are reflected in Danda and Toads For Supper. Kayira, a Malawian, is of East African background where most writing reflects the importance of education. However, Kayira, unlike other East African writers, includes numerous elements of traditional life, a technique more used by the early West African writers.

The main characters in each of Danda, Toads For Supper and Jingala are used to present a society undergoing change. Inevitably conflicts arise which compound the problems of an individual who is trying to find his place in a society experiencing change. Taiwo's (1976) comment about Danda could apply equally to these three novels.

> Nwankwo dramatizes the individual's struggle to break through the narrow confines of traditional society and achieve self-expression. (62)

Danda, if viewed through conventional eyes, is not a productive character. He is not thrifty or hard working, nor is he interested in attaining wealth. He does not respect his elders and is neither aggressive nor ambitious. Danda simply does what he wants. Perhaps

he also does what others would like to do, but will not out of fear or status consciousness. Early in the novel Danda enters a car which has just arrived in the village.

> Danda thought for a moment and then said: 'You think you can turn me out of this land-boat?'
> 'Yes.'
> 'You are not fit to.'
> 'Danda is right,' murmured the old woman. 'Does the law say now that when a man has a land-boat he should forget his kindred!'
> Ndulue was beaten. He had made his mark in the world and like most Aniocha arrivers he was now cultivating the good-will of his neighbors. The last thing he wanted was for it to get about that he had refused a member of his kindred hospitality. So, smiling, he nodded to the driver, got in himself, and sat beside Danda.
> The crowd clapped their hands.
> 'Thank you,' said Danda. 'And farewell. Stay on the ground and eat sand. Danda is flying to the land of the spirits on the wings of the eagle.' (8)

Danda makes a conscious attempt to be different. He makes himself an ozo staff (ngwu agelaga), the symbol of a recognized village leader, and uses it in public. This is a breach of accepted social code in Aniocha.

> 'When I spoke to him he said that the ngwu agelega was his father's.'
> 'No man can hold on to what Danda says. What Danda says has neither head nor tail.'
> There was laughter.
> 'It does not amuse me!' roared the Ikolo man. 'It is long since Danda began pouring sand in our eyes.'
> 'But is the ngwu agelega his or his father's? We want to know.'
> . . . . . .
> Araba stirred and said calmly: 'This is a question for Danda himself. I haven't been home to know whether the ngwu agelega he carried is mine or his?
> 'Why should he have one? Is he an ozo man?' (23-24)

Yet, Danda gets away with it because "Whatever concerns Danda is different." (148). The village elders, Araba, Danda's father, and the villagers reconcile themselves to Danda's antics and by not punishing his abuse of tradition they begin adjusting to change.

Through Danda's life in society, glimpses are presented of what is valuable to that society. A measure of a man's wealth and importance are

> a long barn, ten women, an obi of which much noise was made. Araba was known to have always been a fighter for Aniocha and Uwadiegwu. Finally, and most important of all, he had taken the ozo [title which enhances status] before anybody alive. (35)

Although nobody enjoys an excruciating experience, another measure of a man's status is his ability to withstand pain.

> The great point of the ici is that it is a test of fortitude. The ogbu rips off pelts of flesh in a traditional pattern that stretches from ear to ear. The operation is excruciating. But the victim is to bear the pain if not with a smile at least without any visible show of sorrow. If he winces or cries out, he breaks the magic of the ritual and lets down himself and his kindred. (149)

Values of this nature Danda not only rejects, but tries to undermine throughout the novel.

Change in Jingala comes more from outside the village of Chimaliro, than from within. Gregory, Jingala's son, has been away at school for three years and has become less and less inclined to return to his village for holidays or to visit his relatives and friends. He has grown away from village life and his father. When Jingala visits him at school

> Gregory remained speechless, almost as if transfixed to the spot by some invisible

> force. He was, generally speaking, a proud young man, vocal and forthright in his dealings with other students, especially if he had reason to consider them inferior to himself in any way. He had seldom spoken of his background, even more seldom of his immediate relatives, for both in speech and in manner, he had always been at great pain to impress on the others that he was high in society. His father's previous appearance at the school had been both unwelcome and humiliating and, in his opinion, had helped reduce his standing in the eyes of the other boys. The other boys knew about Gregory's preoccupation with his own importance and they often made fun of him in his absence. (17-18)

Gregory's declarations that he will not return home again this holiday because he needs to study Latin to become a priest rile his father to a virtually uncontrollable level.

> 'I'm going to be a priest and so I will need a working knowledge of Latin.'
> 'You are going to be what?' Jingala said in a slow but firm and loud voice. Gregory knew at once that his father was angry. 'Repeat what you have just said.' he commanded.
> . . .
> 'I decided on it myself,' Gregory said. 'Nobody decided for me.'
> 'That changes everything,' Jingala announced, now preparing to lie down on his mat again. 'You are not digging your garden tomorrow because we are going home first thing in the morning.'
> 'I am not going home.'
> 'You are coming with me, Greg,' he said with finality as he lay down. 'I have not been paying my money here to train a priest! Huh!'
> 'But I'm not coming home with you tomorrow or at any time,' Gregory said rebelliously.
> 'Sleep!' Jingala said in a very commanding voice. 'We are leaving this place first thing in the morning. Remember, my boy, it's me your father speaking, and I don't want to hear any more nonsense from you. I may be old and uneducated, but I am still your father. Always remember that.' (24-25)

The second influence to cause change is the return to the village of miners from the South African mines. The returning miners have

both money and stories to share. Liz, who is betrothed to Jingala, is taken in by stories of life in the towns near the South African mines, told to her by Muchona, a returned miner.

> Liz remained as silent as a rock. She had finished rinsing her pot and was filling it with water. But her silence only encouraged him to stretch his imagination even further so that he started dishing out to her even more lies about his own importance.
>
> 'In the town, I ride my bicycle to and from my office every day,' he said, emphasizing the word 'office'. She will never guess, he thought, the difference between an office and a mine. 'I go to the cinema every evening. Have you ever been to a cinema? Obviously you haven't.'
>
> . . . . . .
>
> He might have gone mad with excitement at this point if he had known that Liz had suddenly become rather fascinated with his report about the town. (105-6)

The outside influences causing a move towards possible change are contrasted with the traditional view of life. Jingala tells Father Edwards what is expected of a person in the village.

> 'I should say, in fact, that his stupid education has already made him unhappy to some extent by taking him away from his own people. He no longer likes to go home and see his people. . . . Any person who doesn't know his own people is lost and useless, never mind his education.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> 'As a man,' Jingala said with grave emphasis but rather restlessly, 'the purpose of my life is to provide for my family, to be true and unsevering to it, and to observe what has been handed to me by my fathers. It is also my duty, as I imagine it would be in your country, to pass this on to my children. If I fail in this, there is no meaning in my life, is there? I become no better than a wild beast.' (34-35)

Tradition and change clash throughout the novel as Jingala attempts to force Gregory into the expected mold. Through their interaction glimpses of daily life are revealed as are the traditional

rituals which make up Chimalirian society.

In contrast to Danda and Jingala, the struggle between tradition and change in Toads For Supper is centered in Amadi, a university student who resides on the campus of the University of Southern Nigeria. While the setting is very different, the anguish of the individual sorting out the appropriate changes is similar. Although Amadi's prime concern should be his studies, Ike portrays change through Amadi's relationship with three girls: Aduke, Sweetie, and Nwakaego.

Aduke, a fellow student of Yoruba background, arouses Amadi's interest on first encounter. He is warned against pursuing a relationship by Chima, a second-year student and fellow Ibo, who reminds him that such a relationship has never been successful. Amadi cannot put the girl out of mind even though he has a girl at home.

> Feeling of achievement. Could that be his reason for wanting Aduke? Nwakaego, his bride-to-be, had been won for him by his parents, and not through his proficiency in the technique of courtship. Aduke provided the opportunity. (13)

Interwoven with his pursuit of Aduke are flashes of the expectations of the university and the community from which Amadi comes. When Amadi registers at the university he wants to take Honors English although his community urges him to take Medicine for they have no local doctor in Ezinkwo.

> And so, in spite of his excellent performances in Physics, Chemistry and Biology, Amadi arrived at the University determined to study English like his hero, Mr. Ola.
>
> The shock came when he failed the selection examination set by the Department of English. (16)

The Academic Registrar indicates he needs a formal application for a change of course to which a sponsorship agreement from Amadi's village leaders must be attached before the appropriate committee can consider it. Amadi travels home to attain the required permission, a trip that takes four days. Then, the Committee of Deans refuses to entertain Amadi's request for transfer to Medicine. Instead, he was told to revert to the Honors History course.

> And so Amadi became a History Honors student . . . . He had not applied to read History, neither did he sit the qualifying test. He did not know who told the Committee of Deans that he had been admitted to the course, and he had no intention of finding out. When at the end of the first term the History Department discovered that he should not have been in the Honors class, it was difficult to know where to lay the blame. (22)

After his first year at University, Amadi returns to Ezinkwo where he revels in the villager's response to his educational attainment.

> There were many other questions. Mazi Onuzulike Chukwuka smiled happily and proudly as he watched his son answer every question. He was the lucky man in town, with a son in the University. (37)

However, Amadi is not so positive about having to continue his arranged relationship with Nwakaego.

> Doubts which had begun to trickle into his mind following his first few meetings with Nwakaego, and which he had struggled to suppress, were now returning with redoubled vigour. What would his friends and colleagues at the University say if they heard of his attachment to a girl who had no mind of her own and who could not look her fiancee in the face?
>
> . . . . . .
>
> A voice spoke to him: 'You can't back out now. Remember you have all the time given your support. However long you may wait, Nwakaego will

> turn out to be what you make of her. Give her a fair chance. Show that you appreciate her problems. Don't compare her with Aduke. . .' (78-79)

During Amadi's second year at University, Sweetie complicates the situation by accusing Amadi of being the father of her unborn child, causing Amadi to be dismissed from university, disowned by his family and turned out of Ezinkwo.

> . . . If there is anything the University is expected to teach you, it is to accept responsibility for your actions. I have listened carefully to both sides of the story. Essentially, both of you agree that something transpired. You differ on the details, which I consider immaterial. Well, madam, you can go with him and he will give you the note. (112)

Amadi refuses, so

> was asked to leave the University within twenty-four hours, and to stay away for the rest of the term for failing to carry out 'the lawful commands' of an officer of the University. (112)

Caught between the expectations of various individuals and communities, Amadi must learn to deal with his actions and find an avenue to take that will provide him a satisfying future.

The need for social change, then, is presented in Danda, Jingala, and Toads For Supper by three individuals impatient with the constraints placed on them. Danda, a comic character and palpably human, loves to dance, gossip, drink palm-wine and make love. His fondness for playing the flute is also reminiscent of Unoka, Ononkwo's father in Things Fall Apart. Although Danda appears shiftless and irresponsible, it is through his actions that he makes up for his defects and inconveniences by entertaining others with his antics and jokes.

> Danda was one of the last to come and he greeted the unumma with typical ebullience:

> 'Kliklikli!'
> 'Yiii!'
> 'Kliklikli!'
> 'Rain!'
> 'If there is anyone to whom what is good is not good let him embrace the thorn tree and see how he likes it.'
> The feeling of animation which he had helped to create persisted until Nwokeki rose to speak. (42)

Danda's quips and vitality, though, prevent the villagers from noticing the strains and tensions already disturbing the smooth surface of communal life.

> 'The world is bad nowadays,' said Danda. 'Let the world be good. Let this oji cleanse the world. Let it make us friends. May each man have what is due to him. The hawk shall perch and the eagle shall perch. Whichever bird says to the other don't perch let its wings break.' And Danda tossed the drink into his mouth and sighed gustily. (11)

Danda's listeners endorse his toast, but miss the intended meaning. Danda is good and they are bad so to cleanse the world would be to destroy what they hold dear. Reference to the hawk and the eagle are pleas for friendship and accommodation to be developed between traditional religion and Christianity.

Danda is aware of the hypocritical attitude of the villagers and of the hollowness of Christianity so he is attempting exposure through his playfulness.

> 'I know,' said Danda. 'They smile in my face but as soon as my back is turned they say: "Do not take notice of Danda. He is no good." But I will not tell you a lie, son of our fathers. I cannot run away from the smile of a woman. Let us go for palm-wine.' (92)

In direct contrast to Danda, Gregory in Jingala goes his own way too, but without the slightest concern for his father or community.

He is presented as an objectionable teenager, who is totally selfish and without redeeming features. Roscoe (1979) comments that Gregory is not priestly material despite his espousal of wanting to work for God, disinterest in Belita, the village girl he is supposed to marry, and sacrificing of holidays to learn Latin. Initially, Gregory appears openly disobedient, scornful of village life, lazy, and reluctant to dirty his hands in the field.

> Jingala ignored his son's uncalled for remarks. Instead he said, 'I asked you to milk the cows for me today because I have other work to do. I can milk one of them myself this morning before I go to the forest, but I want you to milk the other three in the afternoon for me.'
> 'Oh, yes,' Gregory said, 'But I can't.'
> 'Why can't you?'
> 'You know that I always get scabies every time I touch those animals of yours.' Gregory said. 'That's why.'
> Jingala felt a sudden tremor of anger running down his spine, a burning desire to give his son a thorough beating. . . .
> 'Since when,' he demanded, 'have you caught scabies as a result of milking cows?'
> 'Since long ago.'
> 'When?'
> 'I can't remember exactly when,' Gregory said. 'Besides, I am tired and I want to lie here all day. Leave me alone, will you?' (40-41)

The effect of change in character in Jingala is really presented through Gregory's father, Jingala. He is a complex man who reveals his strengths and frustrations in uninhibited fashion. When excited he does a strange little dance to express joy and when upset he unleashes his powerful temper. Jingala takes tradition seriously and is respected among his community.

> He was 55, small but very strong for his age. He had a high forehead, a pair of shrewd little eyes, a more than average size nose, and

> a very fine set of tribal marks on his cheeks which were now lightly covered by a short, thin grey beard. He laughed easily, often throwing his head back and showing the complete absence of his front teeth. . . .
>
> As far as his fellow villagers were concerned, Jingala had become a precious antique. They treated him with profound respect and awe, regarding him as some sort of demi-god, a sacred thing, one who knew the whole of the past and half the future. (1-2)

While Gregory in Jingala is revealed as bull-headed and selfish, while Danda in Danda is portrayed as comical and different, but very concerned about what is happening in his village, real anguish is seen in Amadi of Toads For Supper as he tries to sort out his responsibilities to the university and his community, to Aduke, Sweetie and Nwakaego, and to himself. Ike does little to describe him, so Amadi's character is mainly revealed through action and thought. At the outset he seems to be both naive and overly-confident in his ability to tackle anybody or any problem and encounter success. After his failure to gain admittance to the English program and to overwhelm the girls on campus, Amadi develops in a more realistic manner. He experiences difficulties, grapples with them and after a period of time finds his way again. Growth is seen in his ability to handle responsibility when Amadi and Aduke discuss their relationship and the Sweetie affair at the beginning of their third year at university.

> 'Each time I spoke of inter-tribal marriages you ran through a long list of the problems which would make such marriages unsuccessful — language difficulties, the long distance between your home and mine, cultural differences, political problems and so on. D'you remember once telling me that your grandmother threatened to die if you married a 'Kobokobo'? To crown it all, the Sweetie affair dropped from nowhere. Nobody was prepared to believe my story, not even you. I thought everything over during my stay at Uwhuvbe and I decided that

> the only honourable thing to do was to marry Sweetie.' (142)

The centrality of individual characters is one way the need for social change is pointed out in Danda, Jingala and Toads For Supper. Other techniques used by the novelists are those of humor and satire. Within each novel is a gentle prodding at the foibles and incongruities of life. Nwankwo points out in Danda the inability of the Council of Elders to hear Danda's father's plea for pardon and come to a conclusion.

> 'My voice is low. The proverb says that the word biko (please) never leads to a quarrel.'
> 'True! True!'
> 'If I have wronged you, my knees are on the ground. After all, I am your son and a father doesn't bear ill-will against his own son for long.'
> 'No! No!'
> 'If a man cooks for the community, the community will eat it all. But if the community cooks for a single person he cannot eat the cooking.'
> 'Say no more!' roared the umunna, scrambling for their cups.
> 'You have come like a man,' said Nwafo Ugo.
> The matter of the ofo was again shelved in the moment of thirst and reconciliation. (123)

Food and drink were more important than reaching agreement over a disputed issue. Another incongruity is the inconsistency in mission doctrine. It denied the traditional past, then offered fines instead of new norms by which to live.

> The new converts, faced with all these perplexities, usually drifted back to spirit worship which was a more satisfying experience with its awe taboos and appeal to piety. The steps the church leaders took to prevent this backsliding were prompt and downright. A militant group visited the house of the back-slider and carried away his utensils and brought them into the church and kept them there until

> the owner redeemed them with a fine, and promised to be more diligent in the future. (56)

Humor appears in various ways — through the herbalist's poster which portrays his incompetency, through the use of a strange word and through deliberate affectation in speech.

Jingala, too, provides several humorous encounters. Jingala is the source of most of the comedy for he ignores the question of appropriateness in his behavior. He reacts excitedly and like a playful child when Liz, his bride-to-be, comes into view; he delights in manipulating Gregory while they are at the Chief's home, much to Gregory's consternation, and he initiates a yelling session in Gregory's dormitory at school.

> Then, in a voice that rang across the walls to the big room he called, 'Gregory! Where are you?'
>
> The boys in the big rooms were already up and making their beds. He could hear them screaming and laughing. They heard him too. One of them, apparently for the benefit of Jingala's ears, came and stationed himself at Gregory's door and deliberately shouted. . . . (27)

Gentle poking at inappropriate behavior continues when Gregory repeatedly makes reference to the rat that keeps reappearing in his father's house unaware that he is the rat. Gregory ridicules his father's insistence that deference be shown the Chief.

> 'Don't worry about that,' Gregory said. 'I don't think I am going to see him this afternoon anyway.'
>
> 'You must.'
>
> 'All right,' Gregory said. 'If I must, I will just keep saying, "That's right, Your Majesty", and that will keep him happy.'
>
> 'As long as you don't make it sound artificial and sarcastic.' Jingala said. 'He's

> very clever. He will realize if you are making fun of him, and that will make him very nasty to you.'
> 'Yes, Your Majesty.' (86)

Satire becomes much more pointed in Toads For Supper. The University and its personnel come under fire several times. A typical charge is

> 'That Academic Registrar is a big diplomat, you know,' remarked Amadi. 'When he sees black he turns black and when he sees white he turns white, and all the time he gives the impression he is on your side.' (94)

Religion and its abuses also are exposed.

> He had gone to church only once in his life, because he heard that a white missionary was to talk to the congregation in Ibo and he did not want to miss the fun. He knew that if he became a Christian, he would be called upon to pay all the innumerable church dues and levies. The Mission fund at Ezinkwo at that time was known as 'the bag that was open at both ends'; no matter how many dues and levies were paid there was always an appeal to members for more money. In addition to the monetary collections, each church member was often asked to supply, at his own expense, mats and bamboos for repairing the church building and to help in carrying out the repairs without payment for his labour. Nwankwo felt he was not wealthy enough to be a Christian, and there was no point in enrolling, only to be suspended the next day for failure to pay his dues. (59-60)

Ike further satirizes Amadi's desire to be the first to conquer a Yoruba girl, Chima's underhanded way of trying to become engaged to Amadi's intented, Nwakaego, and the misuse of official university channels through which one must go to obtain satisfaction for a request or complaint.

Humor, satire and presentation of character together reveal the effects of various influences on character and society. They stress

the need for continued change, so individuals and communities can learn to live peacefully in co-existence having adjusted to and accommodated aspects of both traditional and newer influences.

Language used by Nwankwo, Ike and Kayira reveals the effect of traditional and modern influences on the novelists. Kayira has lived away from Malawi for several years so his language shows a certain distance or detachment from what he presents. The language is correctly used for the most part, but events are generally told rather than revealed to the reader. Jingala is described as being a master story teller, but nowhere in the novel is this shown.

> To the children, however, he was always the same delightful old man, the master story teller who seemed to have been created for the precise purpose of amusing or frightening them with the strangest of tales. In this appraisal of him, the children were not entirely wrong, as Jingala himself often confessed that the one thing that delighted him most in life was being able to make up all kinds of stories, most of them in the form of parables, in order, as he put it, to prepare young people for a better understanding of their various roles in life. (2)

Although Kayira's use of language is uneven, he presents through his descriptions a pastoral scene which reveals a realistic account of the victims of a fading past.

Nwankwo and Ike follow the example of Achebe by embedding proverbs in their dialogues so as to present characters who reflect the Ibo background. Ike reveals in his use of proverbs that their significance is lessening as the younger generation becomes less familiar with their meaning.

> 'My ears are itching,' remarked his father, in an attempt to break the silence.

> 'Sir?'
> 'A proverb has a significance when it falls into the ears of the man who understands; when the good-for-nothing hears it he merely shakes the head till he staggers into the bush. To use proverbs on you young people of nowadays is as futile as running after an antelope. What I said was that I am anxious to hear what you have to say.' (81-82)

Perhaps the most vital proverb in Toads For Supper is the one which gives rise to the title: "When a child eats a toad, it kills his appetite for meat." (120)

Proverbs usually provide a means through which to give instruction or warning in very few words. Danda and the village elders use many in this manner in Danda. After Danda has been told not to appear in the village square for six months, he immediately indicates he will attend the next dance. His father's only comment is, "It is when a dog hungers for death that it begins to eat sand." (29)

Ike and Nwankwo both include a set of notes in their novels so they may use untranslated phrases and avoid having to put explanations in the text of their work. Unlike Nwankwo, Ike uses a wide variety of language for he has Amadi exchange dialogue with villagers, porters, fellow students and professors. Each encounter is presented in language appropriate to the characters between whom the exchange is occurring. Conversely, Nwankwo deals entirely with village people so the Ibo speech patterns are most often seen through his writing.

> The scorch season was dying. The happiest time of the year, the season for feasts, when men and women laughing with all their teeth and little boys, their mouths oily, oily, ran about the lanes blowing the crops of chicken to make balloons. In a few days the rain season would come and bring with it the ceaseless sound of labour. And men would leave their homes with the first cry of the cock and would not return until the chicken came back

> to roost. Already the bushes were on fire and the acrid smell of burning permeated the earth. (64)

Within this paragraph is seen the poetic 'scorch season dying', the transliteration of 'men and women with all their teeth', the use of repetition for emphasis in 'litle boys, their mouths oily, oily' and an ordering of sentences which shows the flow of activities at the end of a season.

Protagonists in Toads For Supper, Danda and Jingala depict many of the characteristics of anti-heroes in the individual's struggle to find his place, to have some measure of self-expression without being hampered by tradition. The endings provide no definite answers; the reader is left uneasily wondering what will happen next. However, the individual has asserted himself, and the focus has shifted towards a new struggle — the struggle between the importance of the group and the importance of the individual. These novels have no axe to grind; they are non-political; they are light. Each provides an easy introduction to various aspects of African life.

The ten novels selected and analyzed reveal insights and techniques which would be of interest to students. Chinua Achebe's novels Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease, Arrow of God, and A Man of the People together present an historical perspective for they reveal the change in society over a period of seventy-five years. If viewed from the rural-urban perspective, Things Fall Apart and Arrow of God align themselves against No Longer at Ease and A Man of the People. The novels studied separately offer interesting variety. Things Fall Apart depicts the individual caught between the traditional way of life in which he believes and the society in flux where the society's

lack of a definite stand causes the individual to sacrifice himself. Arrow of God presents a psychological study of Ezeulu, a man unable to decide if he should obey the dictates of his god or the needs of his society. No Longer at Ease reveals the newly educated man unable to fit into the expectations of traditional or modern society and A Man of the People satirizes the Africans' rush to mimic the behavior and amass the material wealth their colonizers exhibited.

Amos Tutuola's The Palm-Wine Drinkard, besides portraying the quest motif, offers insights about African myth and legend, and provides an opportunity to examine language use by characters closely tied to the oral tradition and unfamiliar with standard English. Another novel depicting the quest motif is Gabriel Okara's The Voice. This novel, too, may be studied in a variety of ways. A comparison of characters in The Voice and Things Fall Apart reveals how characters who begin at opposite points, like Okolo, an outsider, and Okonkwo, an insider, can both be destroyed because of their respective society's stand. Contrasting with the above comparison would be a study of Okolo and Danda, both outsiders at the beginning of their novels The Voice and Danda. Danda, however, eventually becomes a leader as his society adjusts to change, while Okolo's society does not and Okolo is destroyed.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Weep Not, Child, Nkem Nwankwo's Danda, Legson Kayira's Jingala and Chukwuemeka Ike's Toads For Supper each portray boys or young men struggling to make sense out of the confusion in the societies in which they live and to find a direction for themselves that will allow them to develop freely. Weep Not, Child if viewed historically, reveals an important part of the Kenyan

revolt. If viewed biographically, it takes into account some of Ngugi's youth. Toads For Supper, Jingala and No Longer at Ease offer possibilities for concurrent study as each portrays an individual who goes against what is expected of him.

Each novel selected and analyzed thus has several ways in which it could be viewed by students. The brief analysis of each novel and the suggestions for use are only a beginning. Teachers will be able to find various methods and approaches to enhance the teaching of African novels written in English as an integral part of the English program.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> What better way is there to create viable and more positive human relationships than through the study of literature, for it is through literature that one gains insights into those universal verities of life: pain, love, hope and dreams as they touch the lives of all men? (Perry, 1971, 1061)

The purposes of this study have been to present an overview of African novels written in English in order to identify those novels that have possibilities for use in the high school classroom and to provide a brief analysis of the selected novels. The study highlights the enriched knowledge and understanding that will accrue to students and teachers who study one or more African novels written in English. Considerable information organized in four steps has been presented to aid the teacher in assessing selected African novels for high school use. These steps are the establishment of the need for such study by students, the perspectives necessary to make the study meaningful, the overview of eighty novels by forty-two novelists, and the analysis of ten novels which have possibilities for classroom use.

The need to study the fictional offerings of African novelists writing in English has been established through discussion of the few studies undertaken in the area of Black literature and students' response to its use, the increasing concern about the lack of a wide range of literary material offered students (being voiced by numerous educators) and the changing curricular objectives for language arts programs. This review of the literature has emphasized

that within a study of the literature of diverse countries students have the opportunity to develop an appreciation of the worth of individuals from different cultural environments, to become aware of various people's contribution to today's world, and to study the distinctive features of works by authors from those countries.

Two perspectives with which teachers and students need to become familiar in order to more fully appreciate the writing of African novelists are the role of the oral tradition in African life and the purposes for literature identified by African writers. Just as in teaching any literature the conscientious teacher, as well as having a thorough knowledge of the literature to be taught, must learn the significant facts about the history and culture of the writers and make an effort to understand their national or racial experience in order to comprehend the significance of their writings.

Out of the particular background of the African novelists has come the need to modify the accepted characteristics of the novel. These modifications — the character as representative of the group or in opposition to the group, the plot as a loose narration of events or the presentation of a particular situation which affects both individual and group, the use of local color to develop atmosphere and mood, the use of African sentence patterns, phrases, and proverbs to enhance the African character and environment — are examples of the African novelists' attempt to meld those techniques that provide greatest meaning in the African context with western genre expectations. These essential characteristics have been woven into the framework which was used in the assessment of novels described in

the overview.

The overview of African novels written in English since 1952 revealed considerable variation in the quality of the novels. Novels which reveal deep insights into the African's struggle stand alongside works which do little more than recount traditional customs or reflect personal experience. Several trends also emerged during the overview. Early novels presented a way of life untouched by outsiders. Later novels moved through the stages of depicting confrontations between traditional and western ways to the presentation of problems which arose prior to, during, and after Independence. Recent novels have shown greater concern for the individual and his struggle to find his place in these changing societies.

Finally, ten novels, Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease, Arrow of God, A Man of the People, Weep Not, Child, The Palm-Wine Drinkard, The Voice, Danda, Jingala and Toads For Supper, were selected and analyzed to identify some of the insights and techniques they revealed which would be of interest to high school students and their study of literature.

Based on the research completed during the preparation of this study, the following conclusions were reached.

1. The study of African novels written in English has relevance for today's high school students.
2. The African background of the novelists and their purposes for writing literature provide students with a different viewpoint through which to respond to literature.

3. The overview of African novels written in English reveals that a considerable amount of writing of varying quality has been published.
4. African writing of quality which has possible use in high schools offers
   a. insights which reveal the common concerns of all men developed in relation to the unique background of each character,
   b. literary characteristics which have been modified to suit the background and needs of the African characters,
   c. language variations that reflect the background of the character and his understanding of the English language.
5. African novels written in English and related secondary source materials are becoming more readily available to those interested in attaining and using them.

In view of the foregoing conclusions, and in view of the opportunities for Canadian secondary schools to implement the use of a wide range of literary materials in their English Language Arts program, the following recommendations are generated for consideration by classroom teachers, curriculum developers and researchers.

1. That themes and approaches be identified which could be used to ensure the African novel written in English is studied as an integral part of the regular English course.

2. That the cultural background in which the novel was written, the social and historical period in which it is set and the novelist's background be studied to identify information which would enhance the insights to be gained from the study of the selected novel.
3. That units which centre on the African novel written in English be developed and tested to ascertain student response to the insights gained and techniques studied.
4. That opportunities for grants to study African literature in a place where such study is intense be made available to professors, curriculum developers and teachers.
5. That ways be identified in which a wider range of literary material could become an integral part of the English Language Arts curriculum at the high school level.
6. That schools, school systems, universities and provincial Departments of Education co-operate in the development of courses and inservice workshops for the purpose of preparing teachers to teach a wider range of literature.
7. That the Alberta English Language Arts Council and the Canadian Council of Teachers of English lend more active support in stimulating greater interest in and support for the inclusion of a wider ranger of literary material in high school English courses.

8. That English teachers, curriculum developers and other educators press for more Canadian outlets for buying international literature.
9. That classroom teachers, consultants, curriculum developers and publishing firms co-operate in producing teaching materials for a wider range of literature.
10. That research be undertaken to identify other international literature suitable for high school use.

In view of the multi-ethnic background of the people of Canada, in view of the increasing possibilities of becoming affected by developments in and among numerous countries of the world, and in view of more travel opportunities which enhance possibilities for contact among people of diverse backgrounds, the need to encourage students' understanding of people whose backgrounds may be different increases immeasurably. The novel offers ample opportunity to study people, their situations and problems, and the variety of ways these can be revealed and developed. African novels written in English, because of their realistic nature, provide many insights into the experiences, values, and concerns of African people in the changing societies and shifting world in which they live.

Stambolian (1970), in an article stressing the need for the inclusion of more diverse literature in high school classrooms, capsulizes what the teacher through the study of this wide range of literature can offer students.

> Through diversity, great literary artists have always reached the same goal, heightening

> the perceptions and deepening the insights of readers — truly creating new dimensions. (30)

It is, thus, the responsibility of the teacher to use available opportunities to help students understand how man uses language to express his concerns and share his experiences, how man manipulates language to enhance his point of view, and how man the world over faces similar struggles which are worked out according to the cultural environment in which he finds himself.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Abrahams, Peter. Mine Boy. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1946.

----------. A Night of Their Own. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1965.

----------. Path of Thunder. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1948.

----------. Song of the City. London: Dorothy Crisp Ltd., 1945.

----------. This Island Now. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1966.

----------. A Wreath for Udomo. New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1966.

Achebe, Chinua. Arrow of God. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1964.

----------. A Man of the People. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1966.

----------. No Longer at Ease. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1960.

----------. Things Fall Apart. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1958.

Agunwa, Clement. More Than Once. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967.

Aluko, T. M. Chief the Honorable Minister. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1970.

----------. Kinsman and Foreman. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1966.

----------. One Man, One Matchet. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1964.

----------. One Man, One Wife. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1959.

Amadi, Elechi. Concubine. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1966.

----------. The Great Ponds. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

Armah, Ayi Kwei. Fragments. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969.

----------. Why Are We So Blest? London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972.

----------. The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1968.

Asalache, Khadambi. A Calabash of Life. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967.

Asare, Bediako. Rebel. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

Awooner, Kofi. This Earth, My Brother. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1971.

Dipoko, Mbella. A Few Nights and Days. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1966.

----------. Because of Women. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

Djoleto, Amu. The Strange Man. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1967.

Duodu, Cameron. The Gab Boys. London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1967.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. Beautiful Feathers. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1963.

----------. Burning Grass. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.,

1962.

----------. Iska. London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1966.

----------. Jagua Nana. Toronto: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1961.

----------. People of the City. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1963.

Ike, Chukwuemeka. The Naked Gods. London: Fontana Books, 1970.

----------. The Potter's Wheel. London: Fontana Books, 1963.

----------. Toads For Supper. London: Fontana Books, 1965.

Kayira, Legson. The Civil Servant. London: Longman Group Ltd., 1971.

----------. Jingala. London: Longman Group Ltd., 1969.

----------. The Looming Shadow. New York: Doubleday, 1967.

Kibera, Leonard. Voices in the Dark. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1970.

Konadu, Asare. Night Watchers of Korlebu. Accra: Anuwuo Publications, 1968.

----------. Ordained by the Oracle. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1968.

----------. Shadow of Wealth. Accra: Anuwuo Publications, 1966.

----------. A Woman in Her Prime. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1967.

LaGuma, Alex. And a Threefold Cord. Berlin: Seven Seas Publishers, 1964.

----------. The Stone Country. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1967.

----------. A Walk in the Night. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1967.

Lubega, Bonnie. The Outcasts. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1971.

Mangua, Charles. Son of Woman. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1970.

Masiye, Andreya. Before Dawn. Lusaka: National Educational Company of Zambia, Ltd., 1971.

Mphahlele, Ezekiel. The Wanderers. London: Fontana Books, 1971.

Mulaisho, Dominic. The Tongue of the Dumb. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1971.

Munonye, John. Obi. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

----------. Oil Man of Obange. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1971.

----------. The Only Son. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1966.

Ngubiah, Stephen. A Curse From God. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (also James Ngugi). A Grain of Wheat. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1967.

----------. Petals of Blood. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1977.

----------. The River Between. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1965.

----------. Weep Not, Child. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1964.

Nwankwo, Nkem. Danda. London: Fontana Books, 1964.

----------. My Mercedes is Bigger Than Yours. London: Heinemann

Educational Books Ltd., 1975.

Nwapa, Flora. Efuru. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1966.

----------. Idu. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1970.

Nzekwu, Onuora. Blade Among the Boys. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1962.

----------. Highlife For Lizards. Toronto: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1965.

----------. Wand of Noble Wood. Toronto: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1961.

Oculi, Okello. Prostitute. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968.

Okara, Gabriel. The Voice. London: Fontana Books, 1964.

Okpewho, Isadore. The Victims. London: Longman Group Ltd., 1970.

Palangyo, Peter. Dying in the Sun. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

Peters, Lenrie. The Second Round. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1965.

Rubadiri, David. No Bride Price. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967.

Ruhumbika, Gabriel. Village in Uhuru. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1969.

Seruma, Eneriko. The Experience. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1970.

Serumaga, Robert. Return to the Shadows. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

Tutuola, Amos. The Brave African Huntress. London: Faber and Faber,

1958.

----------. Feather Woman of the Jungle. London: Faber and Faber, 1962.

----------. My Life in the Bush of Ghosts. London: Faber and Faber, 1954.

----------. The Palm-Wine Drinkard. London: Faber and Faber, 1952.

----------. Simbi and the Satyr of the Dark Jungle. London: Faber and Faber, 1955.

Ulasi, Anaora. Many Things Begin For Change. London: Fontana Books, 1972.

----------. Many Things You No Understand. London: Fontana Books, 1970.

Wachira, Godwin. Ordeal in the Forest. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968.

Secondary Sources

Abrash, Barbara. Black African Literature in English Since 1952. New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1967.

Achebe, Chinua. "The Black Man's Burden." Presence Africaine, 31, No. 59 (1966), n. pag.

----------. "English and the African Writer." Transition, No. 18 (1965), p. 30.

----------. "Interviews." In African Writers Talking. Ed. D. Duerden and C. Pieterse. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972, pp. 3-17.

----------. "The Novelist as Teacher." 1965. In African Writers on

African Writing. Ed. G. D. Killam. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973, pp. 1-4.

----------. "The Role of the Writer in a New Nation." 1964. In African Writers on African Writing. Ed. G. D. Killam. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973, pp. 7-13.

----------. "Where Angels Fear to Tread." 1962. In African Writers on African Writing. Ed. G. D. Killam. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973, pp. 4-7.

Adetugbo, Abiodun. "Form and Style." In Introduction to Nigerian Literature. Ed. B. King. London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1971, pp. 173-191.

Alberta Education. Program of Studies for Junior High Schools. Edmonton: Alberta Education, 1978.

----------. Secondary Language Arts Handbook, Grades 7-12. Edmonton: Alberta Education, 1975.

----------. "Senior High Language Arts Teacher Questionnaire." unpublished report, Edmonton: Alberta Education, 1976.

Angoff, C. and J. Povey. African Writing Today. New York: Manyland Books, Inc., 1969.

Armstrong, Robert. "The Narrative and Intensive Continuity: The Palm-Wine Drinkard." Research in African Literature, 1, No. 1 (1971), 9-34.

Arnez, N. L. "Racial Understanding Through Literature." English Journal, 58, No. 1 (1969), 56-61.

Awooner, Kofi. The Breast of the Earth. Garden City, New York: Anchor Press, 1975.

Bazelak, L. P. "A Content Analysis of Tenth-Grade Students' Responses

to Black Literature, Including the Effect of Reading This Literature on Attitudes Towards Race." Diss. Syracruse University 1973.

Beier, Ulli. Introduction to African Literature. London: Longman, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967.

Bishop, D. "African Critics and African Literature: A Study of Critical Standards 1947-1966." Diss. Michigan State University 1970.

Bostick, H. F. "The Introduction of Afro-French Literature and Culture in the American Secondary School." Diss. Ohio State University 1971.

Brown, L. W. "Cultural Norms and Modes of Perception in Achebe's Fiction." Research in African Literature, 3, No. 1 (1973), 21-35.

Busia, K. A. "The African World-view." In African Heritage. Ed. J. Drachler. London: Collier-Macmillan, Ltd., 1969, n. pag.

Carey, Wilfred. Whispers From a Continent. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

Carroll, David. Chinua Achebe. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1970.

Chidyausiku, P. "Sources of Material for Creative Writing." In African Literature in Rhodesia. Ed. E. W. Krog. Gwelo, Rhodesia: Mambo Press, 1966, p. 44.

Cook, D. African Literature: A Critical View. London: Longman Group Ltd., 1977.

Dathorne, O. R. African Literature in the Twentieth Century. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1976.

----------. "Amos Tutuola: The Nightmare of the Tribe." In Introduction to Nigerian Literature. Ed. B. King. London: Evan Brothers Ltd., 1971, pp. 64-76.

Dieterich, Daniel J. "Teaching Cultural Appreciation Through Litera-

ture." English Journal, 61, No. 1 (1972), 142-147.

Dietrich, R. F. and R. H. Sundell. The Art of Fiction. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1974.

Dodds, Barbara. Negro Literature for High School Students. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1968.

Doob, Leonard. "The Psychological Pressure Upon Modern Africans." In Modern Africa. n.p.: McEwan and Sutchiffe, 1965, n. pag.

Duerden, D. and C. Pieterse. African Writers Talking. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972.

Ekwensi, Cyprian. "Interviews." In African Writers Talking. Ed. D. Duerden and C. Pieterse. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972, pp. 80-83.

----------. "Literary Influences on a Young Nigerian." Times Literary Supplement. 4 June 1964.

----------. "The Problems of Nigerian Writers." New Statesman, January 1965, n. pag.

Eliot, T. S. Selected Prose. [England]: Penguin Books Ltd., n.d.

Emenyonu, E. "African Literature: What Does It Take to be its Critic?" African Literature Today, No. 5 (1971), pp. 1-11.

Forster, E. M. Aspects of the Novel. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1927.

Golub, L. S. "The New American Revolution: Multi-Cultural Literature in the English Program." English Journal, 64, No. 6 (1975), 23-26.

Gowda, H. H. A. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o as Novelist." Literary Half Yearly, XVI, No. 2 (1975), 27-51.

Guth, Hans. English For a New Generation. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Book

Company, 1973.

Hayman, Ronald. The Novel Today 1967-75. Essex, U. K.: Longman Group Ltd., 1976.

Herdeck, Donald E. African Authors. Washington, D.C.: Black Orpheus Press, 1973.

Hesse, N. "A Cultural Approach to the Teaching of African Literature." Diss. Rutgers University 1974.

Heywood, Christopher. Aspects of South African Literature. New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1976.

----------. Perspectives on African Literature. New York: Africana Publishing Corp., 1971.

Holman, C. H., W. F. Thrall, and A. Hibbard. A Handbook to Literature. New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960.

Hook, J. N. The Teaching of High School English. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1972.

Howard, W. J. "Themes and Development in the Novels of Ngugi." In The Critical Evaluation of African Literature. Ed. E. Wright, London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1973, pp. 95-120.

Ikiddeh, Ime. "James Ngugi as Novelist." African Literature Today, No. 2 (1969), pp. 3-10.

Irele, Abiola. "Chinua Achebe: The Tragic Conflict in His Novels," In Introduction to African Literature. Ed. U. Beier. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967, pp. 167-178.

----------. "The Criticism of Modern African Literature." In Perspectives on African Literature. Ed. C. Heywood. New York: Africana Publishing Corporation, 1971, pp. 9-24.

Izevbaye, D. S. "Nigeria." In Literature of the World in English. Ed. B. King. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974, pp. 136-153.

Kayper-Mensah, A. W. and H. Wolff. Ghanaian Writing. Tubingin, Federal Republic of Germany: Horst Erdmann Verlag, 1972.

Killam, Douglas. "Kenya." In Literature of the World in English. Ed. B. King. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974, pp. 116-135.

Killam, G. D. "African Literature and Canada." Dalhousie Review, 53, No. 4 (Winter 1973-74), 672-687.

----------. African Writers on African Writing. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.

----------. The Novels of Chinua Achebe. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

----------. The Writings of Chinua Achebe. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1977.

King, Bruce, ed. Introduction to Nigerian Literature. London: Evan Brothers Limited, 1971.

----------. Literatures of the World in English. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974.

Klima, V., K. F. Ruzicka, and P. Zima. Black Africa Language and Literature. Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1976.

Ladu, Tora T. Teaching for Cross-Cultural Understanding. Raleigh, North Carolina: State Department of Public Instruction, 1968.

Larson, C. R. The Emergence of African Fiction. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972.

Laurence, Margaret. Long Drums and Cannons. Toronto: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1968.

Leach, Josephine. "A Study of Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart in Mid-America." English Journal, 60, No. 8 (1971), 1052-1056.

Lindfors, Bernth. Folklore in Nigerian Literature. New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1973.

Liyong, Taban lo. "Can We Correct Literary Barrenness in East Africa?" East Africa Journal, December 1965. n. pag.

Loban, Walter, M. Ryan, and J. R. Squire. Teaching Language and Literature. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1969.

Luck, J. W. "Identity and Image Development of Students Through Black Literature." Diss. University of South Carolina 1972.

Makouta-Mboukou, J. -P. Black African Literature. Washington, D. C.: Black Orpheus Press, 1973.

McLeod, A. L. The Commonwealth Pen. New York: Cornell University Press, 1961.

Moore, Gerald. "Amos Tutuola: A Nigerian Visionary." In Introduction to African Literature. Ed. U. Beier. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967, pp. 179-187.

----------. Seven African Writers. London: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Mphahlele, Ezekiel. The African Image. New York: Praeger, Ltd., 1962.

----------. Down Second Avenue. London: Faber, 1959.

Nazareth, Peter. An African View of Literature. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1974.

----------. "The Social Responsibility of the East African Writer." The Iowa Review, 7, Nos. 2 and 3 (Spring-Summer 1976), 249-263.

New, W. H. Among Worlds. Erin, Ontario: Press Porcepic, 1975.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o as reported in Union News, Leeds University, November 18, 1966.

----------. "The African Writer and His Past." In Perspectives on African Literature. Ed. C. Heywood. New York: Africana Publishing Corporation, 1971, pp. 3-8.

----------. Homecoming. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972.

Niven, Alastair. "Another Look at Arrow of God." Literary Half Yearly, XVI, No. 2 (1975), 53-68.

Obiechina, E. Culture, Tradition and Society in the West African Novel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Palmer, Eustace. An Introduction to the African Novel. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972.

----------. "A Plea for Objectivity: A Reply to Adeola James." African Literature Today, No. 7 (1975), pp. 123-127.

Perry, Jesse. "Black Literature and the English Curriculum." English Journal, 60, No. 8 (1971), 1057-62.

----------. "Notes Towards a Multi-Cultural Curriculum." English Journal, 64, No. 4 (1975), 8-9.

Pieterse, Cosmo, and D. Munro. Protest and Conflict in African Literature. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1969.

Povey, John. "African Literature in Paperback." English Journal, 65, No. 4 (1976), 103-107.

----------. "The Novels of Chinua Achebe." In Introduction to Nigerian Literature. Ed. B. King. London: Evan Brothers Limited, 1971, pp. 97-112.

----------. "South Africa." In Literatures of the World in English. Ed. B. King. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974, pp. 154-171.

Ramsarand, J. A. New Approaches to African Literature. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1965.

Ravenscroft, Arthur. "Novels of Disillusion." In Readings in Commonwealth Literature. Ed. W. Walsh. London: Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 186-205.

Reed, John. "James Ngugi and the African Novel." The Journal of Commonwealth Literature, Sept. 1965, i.

Robertson, R. T. "Interpreters All: The Commonwealth Context of African Literature in English." Research in African Literature, 5, No. 1 (1974), 52-59.

Roscoe, Adrian. Mother is Gold. London: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

----------. Uhuru's Fire. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Rosenblatt, Louise. Literature as Exploration. New York: Noble and Noble, Publishers, Inc., 1968.

Rubadiri, David. "The Development of Writing in East Africa." In Perspectives on African Literature. Ed. C. Heywood. New York: Africana Publishing Corporation, 1971. pp. 148-156.

Ryan, Margaret. Teaching the Novel in Paperback. Toronto: Collier-Macmillan Canada, Ltd., 1963.

Sanford, N. "Mecca for Social Studies and Literature Teachers." A.T.A. Magazine, May-June 1976, p. 20.

Seymour-Smith, Martin. Funk and Wagnall's Guide to Modern World Literature. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1973.

Simson, R. M. "A Survey Analysis of Some Issues Related to the Content and Effectiveness of Black Literature Courses Taught in Colleges and Universities in New York State." Diss. Syracruse University 1974.

Soyinka, Wole. "The Writer in an African State." Transition, 6, No. 31 (1967), 11-14.

Stambolian, Elizabeth B. "'Many Rivers Reaching the One Sea': Asian Literature in the High School." English Journal, 59, No. 1 (1970), 27-30.

Stanford, Barbara Dodds. "Affective Aspects of Black Literature." English Journal, 58, No. 3 (1970), 371-373.

----------, and Karima Amin. Black Literature for High School Students. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978.

----------. "Literature of the Human Race." English Journal, 61, No. 2 (1972), 205-209.

Taiwo, O. Culture and the Nigerian Novel. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976.

----------. An Introduction to West African Literature. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1967.

Tribble, A. African - English Literature. London: Peter Owen Ltd., 1965.

Tucker, Martin. Africa in Modern Literature. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1967.

Turner, Darwin. The Promise of English. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1970.

Vinson, James. Contemporary Novelists. Don Mills, Ontario: Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd., 1976.

Walsh, William. Commonwealth Literature. London: Oxford University

Press, 1973.

----------. A Manifold Voice — Studies in Commonwealth Literature. London: Chatto and Windus, 1970.

----------. Readings in Commonwealth Literature. London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Wastberg, P., ed. The Writer in Modern Africa. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1968.

Wauthier, Claude. The Literature and Thought of Modern Africa. New York: F. A. Praeger, Publishers, 1967.

----------. "The Situation of the African Writer in Post-Colonial Africa." The Dalhousie Review, 53, No. 4 (Winter 1973-74), 733-741.

Wellek, Rene, and A. Warren. Theory of Literature. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1956.

Whiteley, W. H. A Selection of African Prose. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Wright, E., ed. The Critical Evaluation of African Literature. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1973.

----------. "Problems of Criticism." In Readings in Commonwealth Literature. Ed. W. Walsh. London: Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 152-162.

Zell, Hans and H. Silver. A Reader's Guide to African Literature. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972.